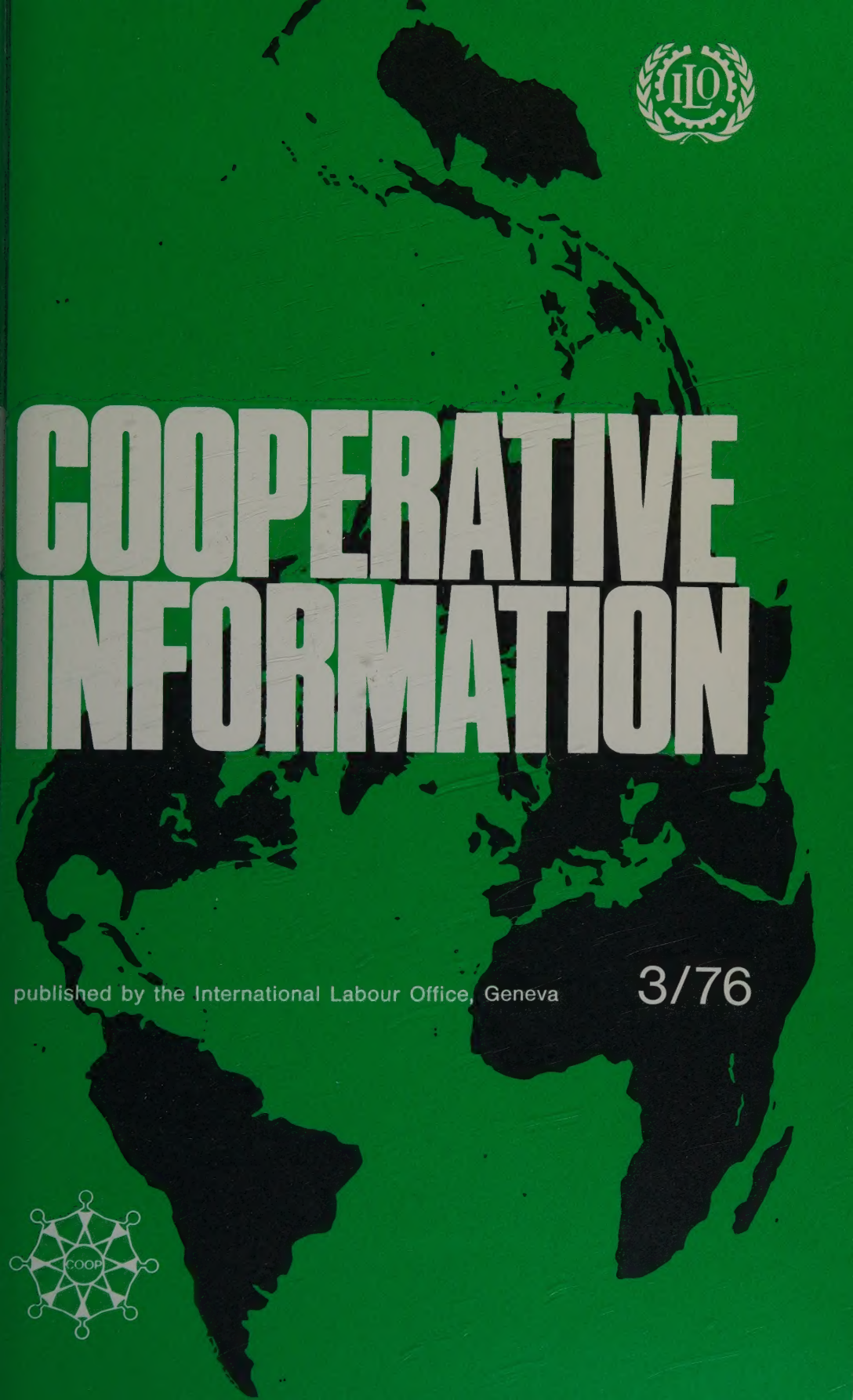

COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

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52nd Year

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Foreword

Our readers will no doubt have noted that the information contained in this issue of "Cooperative Information" is not presented under the usual 6 headings. The reason is that the International Co-operative Alliance held its 26th Congress in Paris, from 28 September to 1 October 1976 and that, for co-operators throughout the world, whether their organisations are affiliated to the ICA or not, this certainly represents the most important event of the year, with far-reaching implications on all the activities they plan to undertake during the forthcoming period 1976 to 1980.

Indeed, for the first time in its history, the ICA has elaborated, and is going to carry out, a long-term programme of action; this programme was one of the two major themes placed before the Congress for discussion. It stresses the importance of promoting further collaboration between co-operatives, which is also the objective of the sixth co-operative principle as formulated by M. Colombain, that is the universal expression of the fundamental axiom of solidarity and good management. We have therefore considered it important to fully report on the discussions and results of the Congress.

Furthermore, we have wished to honour the memory of a great co-operator, Maurice Colombain, one of the former chiefs of the Co-operative Branch of the ILO. A few months before his death, which occurred on the 26th of May 1966, he published his last article in the review "Coopération". In this article, he endeavoured to explain the apparent inadaptation of some of the Rochdale principles to changes which have occurred, over the past century, in every day co-operative activities and which has created uneasiness among co-operators. This last contribution to the co-operative philosophy on the part of a "clear-minded, penetrating and yet discerning observer", as he was qualified by J.B. Orizet - also former Chief of the Co-operative Branch of the ILO, deceased in April 1975 - has seemed to us of such importance that we have requested, and obtained, the authorisation to reproduce it in our Bulletin. We have also felt that this article would provide an adequate introduction to the article by H. Desroche concerning truly co-operative management - a subject of such great importance and yet which has remained so little explored.

~

Theory Methods

A few months before his death, a little over 10 years ago, Maurice Colombain had published, in the October 1965 issue of "Coopération" an article, which could be considered as his belief as a co-operator, but which was not at the time given sufficient publicity.

The authorisation to reproduce this article has been secured from the editors of "Coopération, Distribution, Consommation" (which has now succeded "Coopération") and we wish to thank them for giving us the possibility to do so.

Our objective is first of all to honour the memory of Maurice Colombain who was the second chief of the Co-operative Branch of the International Labour Office, from 1933 when he succeded Dr. Fauquet to 1947; as Chief of Branch, Maurice Colombain travelled to Morocco, in 1937, thus carrying out the first technical mission to assist co-operative movements in countries, now called "developing countries".

Then, the purpose of presenting this article to our readers is to recall, at the close of the 26th Congress of the ICA recently held in Paris, that Maurice Colombain had achieved an analysis, yet still not sufficiently known, of the moral fundamentals of a method of organisation which has an important part to play in the new international economic order, which is so much in the forefront of discussions nowadays.

The various statements made during the Congress, as well as the discussions throughout the meeting, have clearly shown that, at a time when co-operatives are wondering "where they wish to go and how they are going to get there all together" their contribution to the establishment of a more equitable world could indeed only rest on the recognition and defence of the basic values they have in common.

R. Louis

From the Rochdale Rules to the Principles of Co-operation[1]

Daily activities are rarely sufficient in themselves: they need memories to back them up and hopes to exalt them; in other words, a sometimes legendary tradition, a perhaps inaccessible ideal. The man of action needs the comforting illusion that he is a link in the chain of time.

(La bataille syndicaliste, 25 May 1911)

The vitality of the "Rochdale principles", or at least some of them is being queried. Are the pillars of temple beginning to crumble? As early as 1930, during the Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance at Vienna, the Central Committee was asked to set up a special committee to study the conditions under which the Rochdale principles were being applied in the various countries and, if necessary, to express these principles in precise language.

The report of this committee, which was first of all submitted to the London Congress (1934), was finally adopted at the Paris Congress of 1937, with the following conclusions:

"Respect of the seven co-operative principles depends upon the adoption and application of the first four, namely:

I. Free accession to membership

II. Democratic control (one person, one vote)

III. The distribution of surpluses to members in proportion to their dealings

IV. Limited interest on capital.

---

(1) By M. Colombain. The other numbers in parentheses refer to the notes at the end of the text.

In the Committee's opinion, the other three principles, namely:

V. Political and religious neutrality

VI. Cash trading

VII. The development of education,

while undoubtedly forming part of the Rochdale system and having been successfully applied by the co-operative movements in various countries, do not constitute a condition for membership of the ICA."

The question was taken up again at the 22nd Congress of the Alliance (Bournemouth, 1963), which asked for the setting up of a new committee to establish basic principles for co-operative activity under contemporary circumstances, to distinguish amongst the Rochdale principles those which were still important and those which were out of date to suggest, if necessary, modifications which should be made to some of them, and even to formulate new principles for co-operation.

The report of this committee was to be submitted to the next Congress.

Here then is a problem which has existed for nearly 40 years. It emphasises an uneasiness for which co-operators must seriously and sincerely seek the explanation and remedies.

1. What is meant by the "Rochdale principles"?

The "Rochdale principles" constitute the rallying-point for most co-operatives, especially those which are or wish to be members of the ICA. However:

(1) most of them are not really principles, at any rate in the generally accepted sense, as given by Webster's Collegiate Dictionary:

"a fundamental truth, a primary or basic law, doctrine, or the like" (1). They are rules of conduct which the Pioneers chose to justify and pursue their adventure;

(2) they do not constitute all the rules which they set for themselves;

(3) co-operative principles do not consist of these rules alone, because at various periods and by more or less general agreement, some additions were made (not always by the Alliance itself).

2. What is the importance and topicality of these "principles"?

There has sometimes been hesitation in interpreting the choice which the Alliance made amongst the rules set out in the Rochdale statutes and the addition or new wordings given to these rules. Perfectly authentic co-operatives must have asked themselves if they were sinning because they respected rules drawn up at Rochdale, but not included in the statutes of the Alliance (such as disinterested devolution) or because, on the contrary, they had difficulty in following without hesitation rules which did not appear in the Rochdale statutes, but appeared occasionally in the writings of authoritative authors (such as voluntary membership).

This is particularly true when we endeavour to express the Rochdale "principles" in terms better adapted to present-day conditions or even if we merely try to choose amongst them, because we strumble right away on a misunderstanding arising from the simple fact that one word has been used in place of another. This misunderstanding results, for example, in some co-operators being prepared or resigned to modifying or failing to respect what they consider to be a principle, but which is in fact merely a practical rule expressing poorly or in a manner no longer appropriate an underlying principle.

In order to avoid this misunderstanding and to clear the ground for subsequent discussion, I shall no longer refer to questions of principle, but to the Rochdale "rules" and the search for the principles underlying these rules will be guided by these words of Georges Fauquet: "... by principles, I mean not the rules established by co-operative practice, but the moral precepts from which these rules stem". (2).

Even after the removal of this misunderstanding, which explains many of the difficulties underlying the interpretation and application of what have wrongly been considered as principles, there naturally remain other reasons which make interpretation and application difficult and uncertain. An immetiately obvious one is this: whatever the multifarious and ambitious nature of the aims which the Rochdale Pioneers set for themselves, what they in fact successfully created and operated was a consumer co-operative, and the rules which permitted this success are consequently those appropriate for a consumer co-operative.

Is it equally obvious that these rules, established at a time when the mechanical loom had just appeared, exactly meet the requirements and conditions for the success of co-operatives existing in the era of cybernetics, the exploration of space and large concentration of capital? Having been designed for a specific type of co-operative, are they valid for all co-operatives created since 1844, whose particular aims differ to such an extent that it was possible in the French Act of 10 September 1947, for example, to state - somewhat rashly - that they affect all branches of human

activity? Can it be concluded, just because they expressed the intentions of 28 weavers and a small co-operative in Lancashire, that they must be applied to all co-operatives, both great and small, which have spread and are continuing to spread throughout the world, in over 100 countries and under the most varied historical, climatic, economic, social, cultural, technical and political conditions?

Experience has quite rapidly led to the very general preliminary discovery that these rules, established for the operation of a preliminary co-operative, cannot, without major adaptations, be applied to the operation of second - or third - degree co-operatives. Moreover, they call individually for many other comments, of which the following are a few:

1. The first of these rules (3), that of unrestricted admission (or the "open door"), is clearly inappropriate in co-operatives which by the nature of their purposes or operating requirements find it necessary or preferable to restrict membership, such as housing co-operatives, certain co-operatives for the pooling of agricultural equipment, workers' production co-operatives, and co-operatives with limited liability.

In any case, the Rochdale statutes did not possess the binding nature which they have since acquired. Firstly, they were accompanied by precise formalities designed to ensure the necessary advance precautions and conditions; it should perhaps also be recalled that an amendment to Article 1, adopted in 1845, restricted membership (at any rate in the first store) to 250.

2. Further difficulties are introduced by translation of the original texts in non-English-speaking countries.

3. The initial rule concerning rebates on purchases (third rule) was meaningless for agricultural marketing co-operatives, workers' producer co-operatives, credit co-operatives, etc. It is expressed in more general terms today as "the distribution of surpluses to members in proportion to their dealings". Although more comprehensive, this new wording does not eliminate all the doubts or answer all the questions which arise in the almost worldwide practice of co-operation under conditions which vary from country to country and from one period to another. Does this mean that the distribution of surpluses is compulsory? If it is not, can it be concluded that surpluses must not be distributed in proportion to each member's capital contribution? If it is compulsory, what forms may it take? On the latter point at any rate Articles 11 and 42, adopted at the October 1854 General Assembly of the Rochdale co-operative, are more explicit, the former as regards self-financing and welfare activities, and the latter as regards appropriations for education. But how is the rule applied in the various countries and various types of co-operative? How and to what extent is it respected today?

4. The fourth rule provides for the payment of a limited interest on capital. It is said to be Robert Owen who proposed this, but without much conviction, hoping that it soon would be unnecessary.

It was clearly a concession to a custom which, in itself, was foreign to the true requirements and doctrine of co-operators. It was a concession which some co-operatives no longer make and which some legislations even prohibit. The latter situation exists in German legislation, which nevertheless attenuates this prohibition by providing that the statutes may disregard it in certain cases. In France, section 10 of the Decree of 4 February 1959 respecting the legal status of agricultural co-operatives, provides that "the general assembly... shall decide whether or not to pay an interest on capital...". Bulgarian legislation provides more categorically that "no interest may be paid on capital ... either by statute or by general assembly decision".

Is this a rule the non-observance of which could justify co-operatives being condemned? Or should it not rather be interpreted in a negative sense, i.e. that a surplus shall not be distributed in proportion to each member's capital contribution?

5. Amongst the rules "the respect of which does not constitute a prerequisite for membership of the ICA", that of political and religious neutrality has never appeared in the Rochdale statutes. Generally, it has advantages; in some cases, it may have disadvantages or be difficult to apply. It can be recommended or disregarded. It has no specifically co-operative nature. Consequently it is not a rule, still less a co-operative principle.

6. Certain French texts, which interest the term "cash trading" in the sense of "cash sales", give an imperfect rendering of the English expression (4), which only partly covers the rule which the Pioneers set themselves, obliging co-operative leaders to both purchase and sell goods for cash. When given its full meaning, the rule is easier to explain: it was designed not only to protect co-operatives from defaulting debtors among their own members but also to prevent them from failing into the clutches of creditor suppliers. Nevertheless, this explanation is based on historical factors which, although of considerable importance at the time, do not possess the same value everywhere today.

7. Co-operators perhaps attach less importance to education today and there are many reasons to regret this fact, just as there are reasons to believe that its importance is just as great as ever today.

Even only a cursory examination of some of these rules, taken from or inspired by the Rochdale statutes, reveals that most of them bear the stamp of the period and the circumstances in which they were drawn up. From their original wording, it is clear that they cannot all be relevant to the widely varying objectives of all the co-operatives that have been set up since 1844; it is also clear that they are no longer adequate to cover all the factors characteristic of co-operative action. If they can no longer be considered as inviolable, could they not be dropped? It is perhaps this contradiction which is at the heart of the problem.

It is not merely a matter of intelligence, but also a necessity for effective action, to know how to adapt to changing circumstances. However, both action and intelligence must be continuous; they need to stand on a firm base and this must of necessity be inherited: "the man of action needs the comforting illusion that he is a link in the chain of time".

In order to find this base, we have to clear away the misunderstanding which has obscured it: we must cease to regard essentially temporary rules as principles, but must endeavour to link them with precepts. If we succeed, the deep-rooted intentions which inspired the Pioneers when they drew up their statutes will automatically become apparent, the permanent will emerge from the ephemeral, ready to assume up-to-date forms. Thus, by avoiding rules which are framed incompletely or to meet contingencies, we shall easily succeed in remaining faithful to the principles just as "by advancing towards the ocean, the river keeps faith with its source".

3. Five principles

Provided that they are expressed sufficiently clearly and fully, i.e. that they embody the largest possible number of rules established by co-operative practice and at the same time cover the largest number and widest range of institutions to which these rules apply, five principles will suffice to highlight the moral and social essence of the Rochdale statutes.

These principles will be presented using the analysis - which has by now become almost classical - of Georges Fauquet, who discerns two related elements in the co-operative institutions: one social, i.e. the association of persons, and the other economic, i.e. the joint undertaking (5). We shall thus examine in succession:

(1) two principles serving as bases for the rules governing the relationships between co-operators and between them and the association;

(2) two principles serving to define the joint undertaking and leading to the rules concerning the relations between co-operators and it;

(3) a fifth principle, which gives force and finality to the application of the others.

1. The first of these principles is not clearly explained in either the Rochdale statutes or in those of the Alliance, but it is of necessity implied in both. It reflects the very fact of association, which expresses or creates between its members a moral bond of solidarity. This could be called the principle of solidarity or mutual commitment.

In a period frequently referred to as an era of abundance - overlooking with surprising naivety a good half of the human race - the solidarity in question is not always the solidarity brought about by poverty. However, it is generally a solidarity brought about by need. It is passive in some, recognised and intentional in others; some persons are automatically involved, others undertake of their own free will joint action demanding the same sort of behaviour and responsibility from all and offering common advantages. Whether indifferent or active, all co-operators are interdependent, just like citizens of the same nation, and with the same nuances. However, an association does not deserve the name of co-operative if each member (or the majority of its members) seeks merely to obtain a maximum of advantage, while contributing the least possible himself. A person who relies on the efforts of others without making any effort himself is not a co-operator, but an exploiter.

W. King wrote that when a man enters a co-operative he enters into new relationship with his fellow members, and these new relationships immediately become the basis of his morality.

The true co-operator commits himself to other co-operators just as they are committed to him in the pursuit of a common objective. All subsequently endeavour to adapt their behaviour within the association to conform to certain jointly accepted principles.

(a) It is this moral bond of solidarity and this mutual commitment which constitute the foundations for all the agreements which the co-operators establish together and which constitute the statutes of their association.

(b) It can even be said that if this principle of solidarity and mutual commitment did not exist, the strict or unexpected nature of certain statutory provisions would be inexplicable; those, for example, which place restrictions on the right of each member to withdraw and to obtain reimbursement of his capital contribution.

(c) It is in application of this same principle that the members of some co-operatives for the promotion of occupational interests (agricultural, workers' production co-operatives) sometimes accept very rigid rules.

(d) It is again this principle which has led to a rule which is not mentioned in the Rochdale statutes, does not play a very big role in most consumer co-operatives, but which is important - or even very important - in some rural co-operatives, for example, and particularly in the multifarious thrift and credit co-operatives, namely joint financial responsibility of members vis-à-vis non-members.

(e) This principle can be linked with another rule which although not established at Rochdale, is often considered as a "principle" in co-operative literature, that of voluntary membership. Voluntary membership certainly is very valuable if - and to the extent that - it

testifies to the firm and deliberate will of the member to participate in a collective effort which carries with it advantages, responsibilities and risks. However, this cannot be made a general rule, still less a principle. Membership can sometimes be either imposed by circumstances or by legislation: circumstances if the co-operative possesses a local de facto monopoly owing to lack of competition; by legislation, such as laws compelling the beneficiaries of an agrarian reform scheme to belong to co-operatives set up specially to assist them (for example the Act of 12 May 1950 in Italy, that of 1952 in the United Arab Republic).

Moreover, as Georges Fauquet remarks, "the mere act of joining a co-operative is not the only or the essential effort of will which the co-operative system demands of its members; ... it helps co-operators only if they help themselves, if the effort of each one corresponds to the effort of all" (6). Whereas voluntary membership has some limits, the principle of solidarity and mutual commitment is both more general and more rigid. In most cases, it presupposes voluntary membership, or else replaces it.

2. The second principle is that of equality.

Perhaps out of discretion, G. Fauquet has dealt with this like a simple rule. He has nevertheless clearly brought out that it is a moral requirement: in "Regards sur le mouvement coopératif" (7), he refers to "equality amongst peers, equal dignity for all men". It is this principle which might justify the following rules:

(a) Freedom of accession to membership, or "the open door" (first of the principles adopted at the Paris Congress), i.e. equal rights for everybody to enter freely into the association and to use the undertaking's services, whatever his race, political opinions religious views, social status, share in the capital and volume of business with the joint undertakings.

(b) Equal rights for everybody to withdraw from the association under equal conditions for all, established by the statutes.

(c) It can be accepted that this same principle of equality and non-discrimination leads, if not to political and religious neutrality, at least to non-subjugation to a political party or a religion (principle recognised at the Paris Congress in 1937 as part of the Rochdale system).

(d) This equality of individuals within the association is also manifest at the decision-making level on the principle of "one person, one vote". It is the rule of democracy (second of the principles adopted in Paris).

3. To adopt the principle that the co-operative is undertaking with a service function is to establish the moral basis which distinguishes it from a profit-making one. This principle underlies the following rules:

(a) The operating surpluses, if any, shall not be distributed as dividends on capital (negative aspects of the third "principle" adopted at the Paris Congress).

(b) Profits from business with non-members (where such operations are permitted) shall not be distributed among members.

(c) Capital, considered not as the master but as the servant, shall bring in only fixed and restricted remuneration (fourth principle) or even none at all, the shares being considered as contributions which users of the undertaking must make to enable it to render the services which they expect from it.

(d) In the event of withdrawal, shares shall be reimbursed at the most at par.

(e) There shall be no free distribution of shares.

(f) There shall be no incorporation of reserves.

(g) In the event of liquidation, surplus assets, if any, shall be used by the current administrators for such charitable or public purposes as they consider appropriate (8) or, as foreseen in the French Act of 10 September 1947: "The net assets shall be transferred by decision of the general assembly either to other co-operatives or co-operative unions or to works of public or occupational interest". (Note the conformity of this rule with the principle of solidarity: solidarity between institutions of an identical or similar nature, and solidarity between generations).

Those who, through negligence or as the result of a creeping contagion, consider some of the foregoing rules as superfluous or outdated, abandon, either unknowingly or acquiescently, some of the features which typify co-operative action and some of the virtues on which its effectiveness depends. They open the way for deviations of a retrograde nature which could result - and in some cases have already resulted - in capitulation before the principles of the capitalist economy which the co-operative movement claimed that it was going to combat and replace by its own.

4. The rule expressed by G. Fauquet, which establishes quantitative bases for the relations between co-operators and their joint undertaking may also be raised to the level of a principle. This is the principle of moral equity (or proportionality).

(a) This principle is complementary to the preceding one. Since the co-operative undertaking is not set up to make profit, any surplus income must be refunded (individually or collectively) to those who produced it by their dealings with the undertaking. Individual dividends will be calculated for each co-operator in proportion to the volume of his dealings. This is the third "principle" adopted in the statutes of the Alliance.

(b) There is, however, much wider application of this principle which for many co-operatives is no less essential than that mentioned above, which applies merely to the distribution of surpluses; this application relates to the apportionment of financial obligations and responsibilities. Except in consumer co-operatives (and this exception has not always existed) (9), co-operators usually contribute to the building up of share capital and to financial guarantees for the co-operative's liability in amounts proportional to the services which they expect from the joint undertaking, i.e. to the expenditure and risks in which they involte it.

(c) Although the reasons which led to the banning of credit in co-operative transactions at one time have perhaps become less imperative in some cases, a member of them are still pertinent, for example in the developing countries or for certain consumer co-operatives which resort abusively to distribution of credit, more for the sake of boosting turnover than to render service (10). Where credit operations remain dangerous or conflict with the precepts of the co-operative movement, their prohibition recognised in principle at the Paris Congress as being part of the Rochdale system might be justified on the grounds of equity. Credit places a burden on the enterprise which, in consumer co-operatives at least, is unfairly spread since it is borne by all for the benefit of a few.

5. It is to be hoped that the seventh "principle", concerning the development of education (also regarded as part of the Rochdale system), will be reinstated. Respect for it would not necessarily be a prerequisite for admission to the Alliance, but it would be recognised as a condition for the satisfactory application of the other four principles listed above.

Just as the principle of solidarity governs all actions within the association and the principle of the service function produces the rules determining the distribution of the advantages and burdens of the undertaking among co-operators, certain knowledge and attitudes (11) must be acquired, particularly in the field of co-operation, if the other principles are to be respected faithfully, i.e. intelligently and steadfastly. This knowledge and these attitudes are no less necessary today than in the days of Rochdale for without them Third World countries would be unable to establish the co-operative movement essential for their economic and social development. Furthermore, even in today's highly industrialised countries organisational techniques are not sufficient in themselves to withstand the onslaught of a powerful and concentrated capitalism; this offensive is affecting both the primary production and consumption of end-products, two spheres which could be considered hitherto as the domain par excellence of co-operative action in all its forms. However necessary organisational techniques may be, they are no longer adequate to resist the encroachments of capitalism.. "The man living in society has other reasons for acting and reacting than merely those which interest the economist." (12).

It would therefore be wrong and dangerous for the co-operative movement to base its ambitions and action on economic concerns alone. In doing so, it would lose a factor which contributes to its material prosperity and is necessary for its development. In particular, it would become alienated from itself.

When struggles drag on, the adversaries are found to change to the extent of gradually resembling one another. If, in the course of the battles which it has to fight, the co-operative movement does not want to run the risk of degenerating into a simple and commonplace commercial system, i.e. if it wants to survive as a movement, it must not only succeed materially, but must also adhere closely to moral values, to those which gave birth to it and to those which the future may show to be necessary; so much the better if, by interaction, they become lasting values.

It is frequently repeated that spiritual values, ideologies as they are also called, no longer have any hold on the mind. We have nevertheless all seen nations emerging from centuries of apathy and the birth or rebirth of others, fanned (often rather tumultuously) into life by a new ideology. We have also seen other ideologies assuming or accepting tasks of world-wide scope.

What is essential, and perhaps sufficient, is to offer new - or at any rate reconceived - moral values, to give the co-operative movement a living, rather than a mummified, doctrine. We must have the courage to realise that a few rigid and distorted slogans, which have lost all meaning as a result of being passed directly and needlessly from mouth to mouth, no longer constitute a doctrine.

In the western world at least, times have changed since the common sense and devotion of a few and the unquestioning and unshakeable faith of others sufficed to solve all problems and overcome all difficulties.

Those (or some of those) who occupy posts of responsibility in the organs for the promotion and management of the co-operative movement now need an extensive co-operative culture. Training is needed in combinations corresponding to the nature and degree of each individual's responsibility: technical training to permit action, and socio-economic training (including the history, geography and sociology of co-operation) to broaden outlooks.

In addition to the material benefits which it would promote, this co-operative culture, trickling down through all levels of the movement, would ensure the existence at least among an active élite in the rank and file, of full understanding for co-operative principles and determination to respect them; it would also strengthen and sometimes recreate within the movement the common faith, the social discipline and the sense of individual and collective responsibility which are prerequisites for its cohesion, dynamism and development.

It is proclaimed that co-operative structures are based on democracy, but "what is a democracy in which the members do not know what they are talking about"?

Moreover, co-operative education and culture are not merely a means of achieving the prosperity of co-operative undertakings and the conditions in which they can flourish; they also foster the principles on which the specific nature and efficacy of co-operatives are based.

It can also be said that they are in themselves a means of achieving human progress. This is a fairly widespread opinion, to judge from the number of times that this message from "Secteur coopératif" has been repeated: "The primary purpose of the co-operative institution is to improve the economic situation of its members, but because of the resources which it develops in them, it aims at and achieves more. The aim of co-operation is thus to shape human beings, responsible and interdependent human beings, so that each may achieve personal fulfilment and all may attain a full social life" (13). It was in the same spirit that the former director of the Alliance pointed out that the co-operative movement could be considered as a educational movement using the economy as a tool (14). How could we fail to retain amongst the principles a concept which is both a principle and an objective?

Conclusion

The task as expressed in Bournemouth was not to satisfy childish whims or a futile taste for novelty for its own sake. The problem is old enough for us not to inflict on it a caricatural image of a false quarrel between generations. We approach the task in a spirit of humility, but with open minds it may perhaps be expressed as the need to distil from the thoughts of the Pioneers that which belongs to all ages and all peoples, and to abandon time-worn clichés in an effort to combine the expression of these ideas with the realities of the present day.

We should not, however, imagine that the famous common sense of the Pioneers to establish hard-and-fast principles. They were merely endeavouring to find, or more properly speaking to develop and apply (for most of them had already been found) the methods enabling them to achieve the results they desired under the conditions which they had set themselves.

It is a fact that the result - at least that aimed at by the second paragraph of Article 1 of the statutes (establishment of a store for the sale of food, clothing, etc.) - has been achieved. It is a fact that some of the formulae applied have since been adopted successfully throughout the world. It is also a fact that some of them cannot be used with modern components and under today's conditions, and have to be redesigned and rewritten. It is, however,

less a question of bringing them up to date than of expressing them in a different manner.

It is this re-expression which has been attempted in the foregoing pages and it seems possible to extract the following five principles from the Rochdale statutes. As regards the association:

1. Solidarity and mutual commitment.
2. Equality.

As regards the undertaking:

3. Service function.
4. Equity.

And finally,

5. Co-operative education (or culture).

They would no longer be seven, like the seven days of the week, the seven capital sins, or the seven wonders of the world, but the number five is also an uneven number and pleasing to the gods.

Can co-operators accept these five principles? Even supposing that the foregoing analysis is entirely correct, it would be presumptuous to say "there you have the Rochdale principles!". But even if the conclusions are considered as unacceptable, it would be reasonable to adopt the method, i.e. to note that the "principles" were never set out in the Rochdale statutes and that we can merely endeavour to determine them by sifting.

No illumination other than that of history is needed to perceive that, underlying the texts of these statutes, both those that have crumbled with time and those that have survived, there exists essentially, without sophisticated wording and exclamation marks, a lucid and carefully thought out revolt against the profit economy and social domination; there is a concept of human relations firmly established in the spirit if not in the texts. The adventure of the Pioneers lay in their ambition to set up a social and economic system free of exploitation (third principle) in which men would enjoy equal rights and have equal obligations (second principle), sharing fairly among them (fourth principle) the burden and fruits of their joint action, inspired by a sense of solidarity (first principle in an endeavour to improve mankind (fifth principle).

Such is still the ambition of co-operators today because that which was permanent, and perhaps universal, in the minds of the Pioneers is also that which today constitutes the basis of co-operation and explains its philosophy: it is the humanity, social justice and morality.

Notes

(1) Nor, for that matter, that given in French by the Littré dictionary.

(2) G. Fauquet: "Regards sur le mouvement coopératif". An article on co-operation as a moral force.

(3) These rules will be examined below in the order in which they are presented in the report on "L'application présente des principes rochdaliens de coopération", approved at the 1937 Congress of the Alliance in Paris.

(4) "Cash trading" applied not only to selling, but also to buying.

(5) "Le secteur coopératif", No. 13.

(6) "Le secteur coopératif", No. 88.

(7) "Regards sur le mouvement coopératif", article entitled "Formation et consolidation de la coutume coopérative".

(8) This is in fact the sense of Article 44 of the Rochdale Statutes, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 23 October 1854 (apparently for reasons founded on experience or reflection). It is strange to note that many authors appear to be unaware of it. Professor Paul Lambert reproduced it in his book "La doctrine coopérative". It was not retained in the Statutes of the Alliance.

(9) "Regards sur le mouvement coopératif", article entitled: "Formation et consolidation de la coutume coopérative".

(10) Institutions such as the thrift and credit co-operatives for employeed, the French "Crédit ménager", etc. make it possible today, without infringing co-operative ethics, to satisfy consumer credit requirements when they are legitimate (which is very often the case).

(11) Hence the emphasis laid on "culture" in the paragraphs which follow; this term is more comprehensive than "education" in the narrow sense.

(12) "Regards sur le mouvement coopératif", article entitled "L'économique et le social".

(13) G. Fauquet in "Le secteur coopératif", No. 45.

(14) W.P. Watkins, "Education coopérative et civisme mondial". Revue de la coopération internationale, May 1933.

(Original in French)

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Co-operative Management[1]

Introduction

Perhaps the best way to introduce my subject is to recall that the co-operative economy can be looked at from two different standpoints. I refer, of course, to the two major Utopian currents of thought which, each in its own way, made it possible to launch the co-operative movement in France in the nineteenth century.

Their leading exponents were a French Utopian, Charles Fourier, and a social theoretician, Proudhon. Where Fourier saw the co-operative economy as a pleasure economy, Proudhon regarded it as a combat economy. At this point, I would like very briefly to go into these two ready-made definitions in a little more detail.

A pleasure economy

It was Fourier who gave us the word "associate". The word is familiar to all those who have anything to do with the co-operative movement, but what exactly did it mean to Fourier? You are well aware that Fourier was a great Utopian, a bit farfetched for some, much appreciated by others. Be this as it may, the word "associate" had a very specific meaning for him, and we could do worse than to give it a little thought if we are to talk about co-operative management. An associate is someone who, given a particular type of society (a co-operative society or, as Fourier called it, a phalanstery or multi-purpose co-operative), finds that he can enjoy a dual pleasure - in his own words, a "composite" pleasure.

What exactly is a composite pleasure? Take, for example, the pleasure of the table, suggests Fourier. There is an initial pleasure that comes from the quality of the food. We have a good meal; this

(1) Based on the transcript of an address which Professor H. Desroche, Director of the "Centre de recherches coopératives" of the "Ecole des Hautes études en sciences sociales" in Paris, gave at the "Ecole des Hautes études commerciales" in Montreal on 9 October 1975 during a seminar on the management of co-operatives which was organised for an international meeting on savings and credit co-operatives.

makes us happy; that is one pleasure. The second pleasure comes from the "conviviality" of the meal - a word which has become fashionable since Ivan Illich borrowed it for the title of one of his recent books. (I say "borrowed" and not "invented", as some people seem to think. The notion of conviviality already existed in Fourier, who probably got it from Brillat Savarin, who used the expression in his "Physiologie du goût". Brillat Savarin was a gastronomic expert and Fourier his companion). The point is that there is a second pleasure to be found in the conviviality of a meal. Our pleasure is therefore simple if we have one or other of the ingredients, and composite if we have both.

Let us now apply the same image to the co-operative associate.

An associate in a productive, services, goods or other co-operative hopes to experience a dual, composite pleasure. In the first place, there is the pleasure of taking part in an activity that he likes, providing a service that he enjoys providing, doing something that he is really interested in. This is where the idea of "working for pleasure" comes from - a notion which Friedrich Engels, in a tribute to our French Utopian, hailed as long ago as 1844 as the "Columbus' egg of social philosophy".

Then there is the second pleasure: the pleasure of co-operating with colleagues that you get on well with (1). So here we have a simple pleasure - doing a job we like - and another simple pleasure - working with co-operators that we get on well with. Put the two together and we have a composite pleasure: doing a job we like with co-operators that we get on well with. The two pleasures are combined. This is the principle on which Fourier bases his view of collective membership, and it remains, or has become perhaps, extraordinarily topical judging from the way people nowadays talk and write more and more about a "happiness economy". Whatever this may actually come to, it would be a mistake to overlook the fact that, originally, the co-operative economy was to have been a "pleasure economy" - one might even say a "pleasure biotechnology" (2). In fact, this Utopia suggests a number of highly pertinent questions regarding the assessment of any co-operative society or even the possibility of a co-operative bio-technology. And this already brings us to the matter of co-operative management.

A combat economy

The second current of thought, which is also virtually Utopian, is that of Proudhon, who saw the co-operative economy as a combat

(1) Fourier's views on the combination of these two pleasures can be found in Henri Desroche: "La société festive" (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1975), pp. 59-60.

(2) This idea was expanded upon by Professor Desroche in another paper which he read at the Colloque international d'ergonomie in Toulouse in 1975. See Desroche: "Ergonomie et utopie", shortly to appear in the review "Futuribles".

economy. This is not immediately apparent from the works published during his life, but it is very much a part of the diaries published posthumously. There he says something to the following effect: "I have taken a very long time to find the underlying principle of the new society to which I have given so much thought". And he adds: "Here is the brilliant discovery. We are masters in our own house. We are therefore masters of the worlds" (1).

What exactly does he mean by this? Let us paraphrase his own words. What he is saying is that the co-operative, associationist or self-managing society (Proudhon is supposed to have coined all these epithets) is one which engages in a kind of management strike against the dominant society. In other words, it decides to forego the capital market, the goods market and the labour market as they exist in the dominant society and to infiltrate that dominant society with its own workshops, units and cells which operate a new kind of capital, labour and goods markets in which the co-operator is simultaneously buyer and seller. Savings and credit: one group borrows the savings of the other. Labour co-operative, productive co-operative: the co-operators are, at one and the same time, the supply of and the demand for labour. Marketing co-operatives on the goods market: the co-operators are the buyers and sellers of the goods, buying from and selling to one another. The result is a kind of co-operative common market which directs this self-management strike against society. The object is to do without the society altogether by introducing cells, antennae and networks which, as they proliferate, gradually strengthen their grasp, endeavour to compensate for the deficiencies of the dominant society and to control its evil tendencies, if necessary by amplifying their counter-power to spark off, through a chain reaction, something like a counter-society.

Co-operative management

I shall not harp on this point any more, but these are the two approaches or standpoints which I would like you to see as the backdrop of the comments I shall be making and around which I shall weave my variations on the theme of co-operative management. What kind of management are we talking about? Since I have to be brief, I shall start out with a few ready-made labels; I shall even throw in a series of sketches. As I see it, management is four-sided, and I feel that this "quadriptych" could be a useful basis for discussion. There is:

1. the management of assets, of the "moneys" you might say;
2. the management of power, with its decision-making implications;
3. the management of know-how, with its socio-cultural implications;
4. the management of aspirations, with its ethical, sociological and strategic implications.

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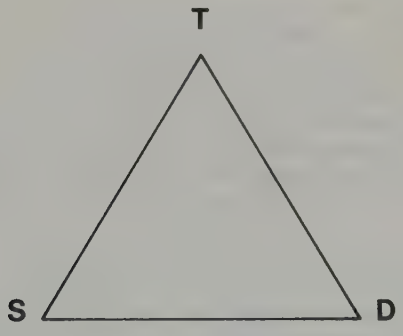
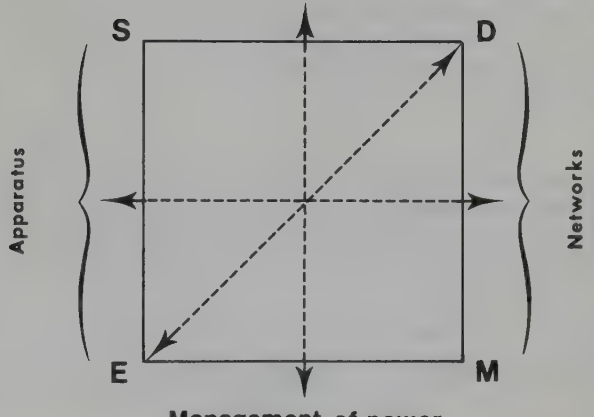
(1) "Carnets de Proudhon", I (Paris, Rivière et compagnie, 1950), pp. 183-184.

I shall illustrate this quadriptych by a series of sketches. First, there is a triangle, the financial triangle; second, for the management of power, we have a square, the organisational square; third, the management of know-how, which I shall illustrate as a diptych or, rather, a double diptych; and, finally, I shall represent the management of aspirations as a series of concentric circles.

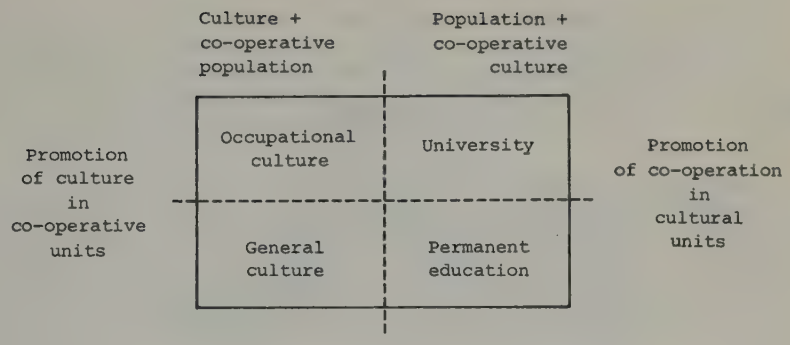
Instrument panel of co-operative management



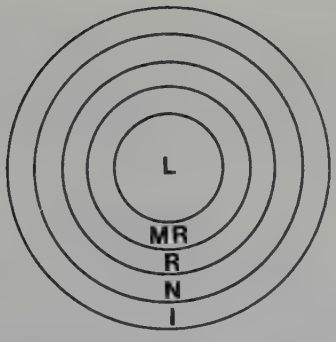
Management of assets



Management of power

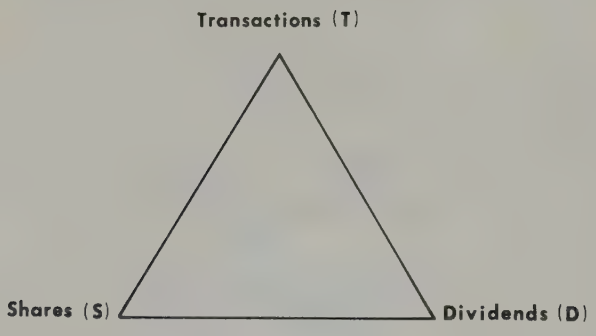


Management of know-how



Management of aspirations

The management of assets



First, the management of assets. If I had had more time I would have liked to link up my comments with references to issue No. 5 of 1975 of the "Revue Desjardins". As I read the various articles, I came across a number of ideas and suggestions that tie in with each of these four sketches. No doubt the authors of the articles will recognise them themselves.

There are three points to the financial triangle of co-operative management. (Finance is, of course, the first thing that comes to mind when talking about co-operative management). Each of these points corresponds to something fundamental in co-operative management: shares (S), dividends (D) and transactions (T). Let us stop awhile and consider these three points, as they raise a whole series of questions. Obviously, a triangle is the first figure that comes to mind when distinguishing between co-operative management and either public or capitalistic management, since in a way it does away with the division between capital and labour. In this case, the capitalists - or, to be more precise, the people who constitute the capital by subscribing shares - also happen to be the people who carry out the transactions. This has two implications: on the one hand, there is a ceiling on the dividend paid on their capital contribution, which is therefore more in the nature of a debenture than of a share; on the other hand, any further redistribution of profits is proportional not to the capital invested but to the amount of transactions undertaken by each associate in the course of the financial year. This is the ABC of co-operative management which everybody, even those who are not part of it, are well acquainted with.

It raises a number of questions on which our discussion could be based.

With regard to the shares - How are they subscribed? How much do they cost? Is the contribution a symbolic contribution? Or does it have to be in proportion with the transaction? Should there be a ceiling on the dividend or should it instead be raised as the followers of the "participationist" tradition advocate? Are we talking about a gift economy or a profit economy?

The last question is of fundamental importance for co-operative management. In the case of a productive co-operative member who, having subscribed a share 30 years ago, is reimbursed at its face value in 1975, what does this payment imply? Is it an open invitation to pursue a gift economy once and for all? Or, on the other hand, are we still harking back to the profit economy? This is the kind of problem that arises and to which there may be different solutions.

With regard to the transactions - Are they symbolic, occasional, loyal or a matter of discipline? As you probably know, some co-operative societies have added a co-operation contract to their statutes in order to discipline transactions. According to this contract, a member not only reserves his transactions exclusively for his society but also commits himself to standard of quality, and therefore to a whole series of other criteria. With this self-imposed discipline, the "open dooes" slogan is dropped in favour of a form of co-operative transaction which obeys such strict rules that the doors become completely closed. It is a phenomenon which is far too widespread (particularly in marketing, and even in supplies) not to be mentioned here.

With regard to the dividends - and its is the big problem - are they to be paid on a personal, community, collective or social basis? The 1966 Vienna Congress, which examined the findings of the 1934-37 Congress on Rochdale's principles, changed its mind about this matter once again and emphasised the possibility of a socialisation of dividends. This was decided after heated discussion, but there is nothing to prove that the matter will not be raised again.

"Non-conventional" co-operatives

These are some of the questions that arise in connection with the three points of our triangle. Their implications becomes even greater if we take into account what the International Labour Office has called non-conventional co-operatives. There are two types of non-conventional co-operatives that are relevant to our first geometrical figure.

To begin with, there is a socialising non-conventionality. By this, I mean that there are some co-operative societies whose socialising non-conventionality is apparent in their advocacy of a form

of management in which there are no shares and not even any dividends. All that is left are the transactions. Nobody is asked to subscribe shares. The only reference of this kind is to certain non-interest-bearing contributions which cannot be shares since they are not remunerated. Consequently, the dividends are entirely socialised and all that remains are transactions carried out under a joint stock system which has been socialised in two directions: no subscriptions, no remuneration.

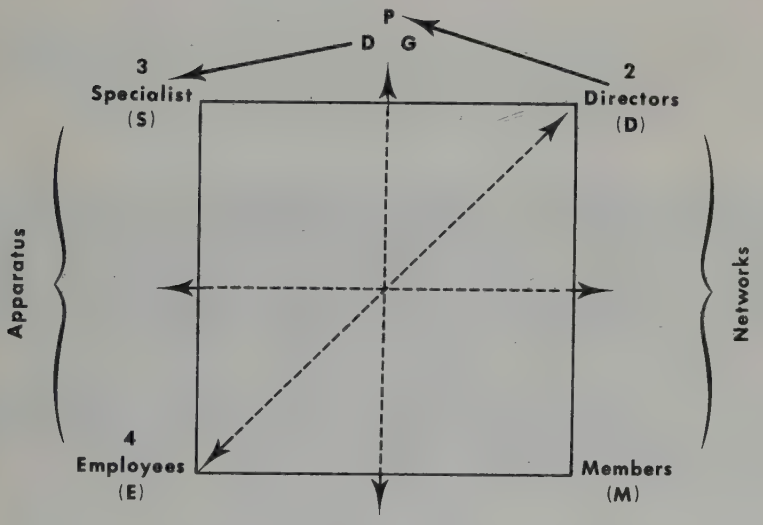
There is a second kind of non-conventionality called the participating non-conventionality. I have studied the subject personally and it goes back a log way, right back to Fourier, in fact, to his well-known "capital-work-talent" notion, and to some of his disciples, such as the nineteenth century economist Vidal. It is found in its purest form in the "phalanstery" of Guise, which was a major experiment in the nineteenth century since it furnished the link between the earlier Utopianism and modern co-operation. Another, quite unique example is to be found in the vast co-operative complex of Mondragon. Strangely enough, Vidal must have known Fourier, but when Godin, the founder of the phalanstery of Guise, introduced this participating non-conventionality, he did not know Vidal and, when the Mondragon complex applied this version of the financial triangle, he know neither Godin nor Vidal. We can see, therefore, a kind of repetitive pattern that crops up again and again, yet each time invented anew.

Under this participating non-conventionality, the role of the capital or shares is quite different from that of conventional co-operatives. To start with, the capital is much higher. Each co-operative member is expected to subscribe more or less as many shares as represent the investment needed for the creation of his job. Moreover, the yield on this share of the capital is in the form of dividends on which, as in conventional co-operatives, there is a ceiling; in addition, however, it earns a share of the profits or of the operating result, the rest of which goes in the form of wages.

Much can be said about this system, which owes its origin to a fact that is not without interest to our meeting on savings and credit co-operatives. The point is that, as can be seen with Godin and in the Mondragon complex, these vast co-operative industrial experiments necessarily involved the constitution of a joint capital of no mean size. As Godin explains in his writings, and the supporters of Mondragon in their conversation, if the capital is not constituted by the members it will have to be found and borrowed elsewhere, and it will cost much more to get hold of it outside the co-operative than to constitute it from within. This is the whole idea behind the "Caja Laboral" in the Mondragon complex. On the one hand, it acts as a vast force of attraction for all the regional savings; on the other hand, it channels the savings into investments in regional enterprises. Apparently, it is even common practice to use a grid system for analysing the collection of capital before creating jobs through industrial or commercial undertakings. Priority goes to subregions which have proved themselves to be particularly good at mobilising savings. This non-conventionality is therefore

the reverse of the previous example. There, the shares become virtually non-existent as a means of constituting the joint capital, whereas here they play a vital role. As co-operatives, they may not conform to traditional canons, even as revised by successive congresses, but, in the light of the vast survey conducted by the ILO on non-conventional co-operatives, they do at least deserve special mention.

THE MANAGEMENT OF POWER



The management of power I have shown in the form of a square - and here I imagine we shall have a certain amount to talk about, particularly with regard to participation. The basic structure of any co-operative, whether it is an association of savers, consumers, agricultural, industrial or artisan-type workers or peasants, can be shown as a square. At the four corners will be found the members (M), who elect the directors (D) who choose the specialists (S), who recruit the employees (E). In terms of members, the size of these four groups may vary. This, in any case, is the assumption on which my students base any analysis of co-operatives. What is the population of each group, and what relationships exist between them? The relationships are perfectly harmonious, if not in the de jure co-operative then at least in the ideal co-operative. In practice, we can see that this raises numerous problems, particularly that of the management of power which is peculiar to a co-operative society. Because of this division into four separate populations, problems crop up that other enterprises do not have to face in so far as they more or less eliminate one or other of the four.

Group 1. The members are usually very numerous. Some mention has already been made of the problem of the size of the membership when people have to be consulted, encouraged to participate, split up into local sections for consultation purposes, etc.

Group 2. The members elect the directors, who are not permanent fixtures in the co-operative but nevertheless have the enterprise's sovereignty delegated to them through the members' meeting.

Somewhere at the top, between Groups 2 and 3, there is a managing director - managing directors both because he is chosen by the management (directors) or by the general assembly and because he is the director (or boss) of everything, including the specialists. This is not always an enviable role, and Mr. Theo Braun used to say that he was everybody's target. The managing director may be a potentate, but he may also sometimes be more like a lost sentry, which does not mean that he is not also very often a whipping boy.

Group 3. The specialists are made up of the commercial, administrative, financial and - why not? - pedagogic, educational and other experts and form another group.

Group 4. Finally, there are the employees who, as has been pointed out on numerous occasions, so far continue to be wage

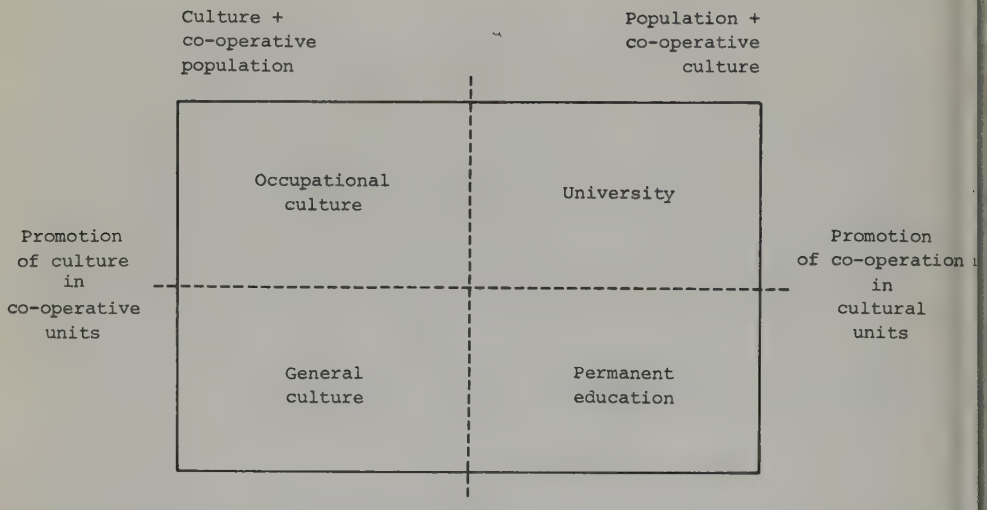
earners in spite of the countless queries that may have been raised on this point at every international congress right up to the 24th Congress held in Hamburg in 1972, precisely on the subject of "co-operative democracy".

This kind of four-sided structure introduces all sorts of problems into the management of powers, since the way they divide up may vary. As a rule, the split will be between 1 + 2 on one side and 3 + 4 on the other. On the left there is what we might call the apparatus and, on the right, the network. One of the big problems of co-operative management is to establish lines of communication between the apparatus and the network, but there is also the problem of helping M and D to communicate, which is not made any easier by the fact that Group M consists of thousands or tens of thousands of people, while Group D consists of a handful or, at the most, a dozen or so. This, as we have seen from the surveys carried out by Birmingham University, is where the problem of participation is felt most strongly. From the surveys which it carried out on England's major consumer co-operatives, the University discovered that participation in the various meetings was rarely more than around 0.5 to 1 per cent.

The relationships between D and S are not plain sailing either, and have to be carefully adjusted. A great deal of conflict can also exist between S and E, as can be seen from a number of examples, including the strike of employees against the co-operative as a whole - whether it be an agricultural co-operative or a consumers' co-operative. The whole problem is extremely delicate.

The division may take another form, for example between D + S (2 + 3) and M + E (1 + 4), along north-south lines. There may be perfect agreement between the north groups, but the other side of the coin may be the virtual marginalisation of the two south groups. There may even be a diagonal division, as occured in a large co-operative in Rwanda, with the board of directors forming an alliance with the employees acting as a kind of trade union (D + E) so as to exclude the members, on the one hand, and to defy the group of imported specialists, on the other. There are, therefore, any number of possible combinations inside the square, and each of them poses a different set of problems for the management of power.

Management of know-how



The third diagram, representing the management of know-how, is in the form of a double diptych. On one side, there is the problem of the promotion of culture in co-operative units and, on the other side, that of the promotion of co-operation in cultural units. This too is bound to have a bearing on the management of co-operatives.

On the left, there are two entries: "occupational" culture and general culture, provided for and/or expected from the co-operative populations. Conversely, on the right side of the diptych, we have a reference to the presence and dissemination of co-operative culture in the population concerned by the two cultural units - either the university unit, or the continuing education (or adult education) unit. This diagram can help us to understand the third kind of management, which is the management of know-how.

If we push the analogy a little further, we can see that, as we get into greater detail, the situation becomes more and more like that of a pilot I was watching the other day on a Montreal-to-Ottawa flight from my seat near the cabin. He was piloting his

plane from take-off of touch-down. All the problems that would crop up "en route" were entered into his instrument panel in a cabin where he had a whole series of buttons, levers, handles, etc., to play with. The way he flew his plane, in other words, the way he solved his problems, depended on the skill with which be used this keyboard. Co-operative management, too, is a matter of operating a certain piece of machinery. It has its own instrument panel or keyboard, and what we are triying to do is to identify a certain number of levers, buttons, handles, instruments and warning lights which are peculiar to this particular kind of operation.

Our double diptych is part of the instrument panel and plays as important a role as the other parts, even though the official international literature coming out of the ICA congresses of 1934-37 may have given in to the temptation to gloss over it, or at least to underestimate it. Fortunately, the Vienna Congress of 1966 put the record straight again and the fifth principle of co-operation that it enounced is more or less a condensation of the four sections of our diagram (1).

1. There is the promotion of occupational culture among the four groups referred to in the management-of-power diagram: members, directors, specialists and employees. Each of these cultural levels differs from the others in rhythm and in content.

2. Side by side with this promotion of occupational culture, there is that of general culture - as the fifth co-operative principle puts it, "on the economic and democratic level". This represents a minimum level of general culture.

3. Next there is the promotion of the presence and dissemination of co-operative ideas in cultural units, particularly in universities (in the widest sense of the term); in other words, at the primary level, the secondary level and the higher level, as well as in respect of the actual organisation of education and that of research in specialised centres. In his remarkable survey of the presence of co-operative ideas in universities throughout the world, Professor Davidovic showed us just how limited this presence is (2).

Having said this, I cannot but support my Quebec colleagues who, at a meeting on co-operation, emphasised the importance of a cultural presence, whether nascent or established. The point is that co-operative sociology or economy may well appear insignificant or irrelevant from the standpoint of the epistemological and ideological interests of a dominant society, and the introduction of elements of co-operative culture is not a foregone conclusion in academic circles

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(1) "All co-operative societies must take steps to promote the education of their leaders, employees and the public in general in respect of the principles and methods of co-operation at the economic and democratic level."

(2) University teaching of co-operation in various countries. A survey and analysis (Co-operative Union, Ottawa, 1967).

reflecting such interests. Moreover, there has to be some kind of empathy between practising co-operators and more theoretical academics in order to create the kind of teamwork that was illustrated in the French television quiz programme "La tête et les jambes". And yet this empathy is not a foregone conclusion either, although I personally have been lucky enough to benefit from it in France for the last 15 years.

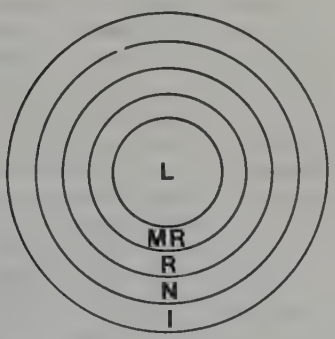
4. The fourth and last component of our diagram is the dissemination of co-operative culture in permanent education. From my own experience, I would say that, unless they have been involved in the activities of school co-operatives or already trained in co-operative methods of education (of the kind promoted by such pioneers as Célestin Freinet) or in the "Institut coopératif", which perpetuates such methods, the young generations formed in the classic model will fall into the rut of traditional teaching methods and feel very little enthusiasm for co-operative culture. It is a curious thing that this education they receive is far more cut off from the notion of a society-in-the-making, harping as it does on the reproduction of a society that is already all cut and dried. And yet the fact is that, as far as co-operative societies are concerned, these young generations are more interested in rethinking them than simply taking them for granted. Conversely, my experience has also taught me that co-operation as a model of society, however elementary and rusty it may be, is an outlook to which fairly young adults are particularly strongly inclined when their own experience has led them to combine career training with the assimilation of a personal culture, even though it may have been self-taught. In point of fact, such an outlook is no less attractive as a model of society than as an educational process.

Seen in this light - that is to say, as a model or strategy of permanent action - there is a chance not just of non-stop promotion by means of the (frequently) non-didactic, or at least extra - curricula, assimilation of a scientific culture but also of constant research, in so far as, provided it is suitably processed and self-analysed, one's own experience is liable to serve as an outstanding contribution to pure or applied research. I am conducting several experiments of this kind with ad hoc groups in France and Algeria and will soon be doing so in Africa south of the Sahara and perhaps even - why not? - in Quebec. The experience I have gleaned has already been heartwarming. I was recently further encouraged by the talks I have had in your own country with the directors of the CRDI ("Centre de recherches en développement international", a research agency attached to the ACDI, Ottawa). I was particularly sensitive to their interest in promoting, not outside research carried out by developers, but inside research promoted by the developed: in other words, self-research, which is at the same time a form of action research. A few months ago I wrote an article on Utopian pedagogy for a special issue of "Esprit" (No. 10, October 1974) on permanent education. In doing so I was able to corroborate that, Utopian though it may be, the concept of permanent research received firm backing from a long-established pedagogic tradition

of which our good friend Kropotkin is a forgotten yet unforgettable example. The Algerian Utopia of a modern "labour university" is proof enough of this fact, and there are many others.

This third kind of management is the one on which I would have most liked to digress because, professionally speaking, it is the one in which I am most involved, because a recent French law on permanent education is likely to bring it to the fore again, because it is a field which has taken me in the past and still takes me outside France, because the outcome of the whole issue is altogether uncertain, because it is an extremely useful yet rarely used trump card in favour of a co-operative economy, because ... because ... I could go on.

Management of Aspirations



Interco-operation

L : local (communities)
MR: micro-regional (multifunctional co-operatives)
R : regional (interco-operative action)
N : national (alliances rather than joint activities)
I : international (complicity and consultation and agreement)

I come last of all to the management of aspirations. No social movement can exist without an aspiration, and the co-operative movement is a social movement like any other. It needs an aspirations, a horizon. Charles Gide called it "a star" and wrote:

> *Do you agree? Do you also regard co-operation as a star? People assure me that you don't; they say that you expect nothing more from it than the odd few practical advantages that I have just listed, and that you look upon those who expect co-operation to bring some kind of transformation of the existing order of things as dreamers and Utopians. If that is true, then you see eye to eye - and this will probably come more as a surprise than as a compliment - with the leaders of the liberal and bourgeois political economy who also maintain that such an outlook is a pipe dream and consider that those who lend them any kind of credence are suffering from hallucinations (1).*

In fact, the co-operative movement has always had an aspiration and there is no way that co-operative management can pretend that the aspiration is not there. The earliest aspiration was towards the co-operative micro-community, the co-operative micro-republic of the Rochdale pioneers, which was inspired by Owen's harmony villages and embodied in their First Law. After a good many ups and downs between 1844 and 1889, the movement's new aspiration was towards Charles Gide's co-operative macro-republic (see his famous speech of 1889, centenary of the French Revolution) (2). Around the same period, this macro-republic, which was at the same time a macro-Utopia, found a parallel not only in the ideas of Ernest Poisson, a militant socialist, but also in those of another socialist theoretician who was to become one of the greatest anthropologists of the French School of Sociology. I am referring to Marcel Mauss, whose works written during his co-operative and socialist youth are beginning to attract attention again. Subsequently, the movement set itself what, in a sense, may appear a more limited but perhaps at the same time more realistic aspiration: the co-operative sector, whose cause was convincingly argued by Georges Fauquet. Since then, in the last ten years, the nature of this aspiration has changed somewhat depending on whether the co-operative sector has evolved in the West or in the East, and above all in the North or in the South of the world. This may give some idea of all the different kinds of aspirations that have to be distinguished from one another or blended together. I do not intend to opt here for one or the other. What I will say, however, is that, if we want to hang on to what is worth salvaging from the micro-cooperative Utopia of the pioneers, or from the macro-cooperative ideology which inspired the movement and kept it going for two or three generations, or from the co-operative sector strategy which has now been developed in all four corners of the globe, then we must concentrate on inter-cooperation. We must pin our hopes on inter-cooperation.

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(1) Charles Gide: "La Coopération", Propaganda lecture (Paris, Sirep, 1922), pp. 48-49.

(2) Gide: op. cit., pp. 75 et seq.

1. To start with, there is inter-cooperation at the **local** level. This is my weakness. I have given much of my time to studying the kind of situation in which co-operation (without yet being co-operation as we know it) has mainly to do with the multifunctionality of "communities", such as the communities of North America, the Utopian communities of France, and the labour or multifunctional co-operative communities of the sort found in the collective "ejidos" of Mexico, the "moshavim" or kibbutzim of Israel, certain "asentamientos" or experimental village co-operative communities in Africa south of the Sahara, not to mention the "socialist villages" of the recent agrarian revolution in Algeria. There is a point worth noting about these local multifunctional co-operatives. What I mean is that their high density and low volume (and I am using these terms in the sense in which Durkheim used them time and again) enables them to boast a social vitality which nowadays is rarely found in the mono-functional co-operatives, with their characteristic low density and high volume. Consequently, I would be only too happy to see the co-operative movement aspire towards multifunctional co-operatives of a local kind, if only as schools for management personnel. The facts are there. A moment ago I was talking about young people who were more or less allergic to the co-operative idea. But look how many young people in North America, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, dream of communities and communes and, not content with dreaming, often put their dreams to the test in micro-societies that have been planned and intended as "other" societies, almost as counter-societies. "Idealists! Madmen! Eccentrics!", gravely pronounces the Council of Elders. All right, but why not? Twenty-five years ago, I too joined a group of people who, you can be quite sure, might have expected the same treatment. And yet that group of people, once they had had a chance to show their determination, managed to set up a whole network of co-operatives which undoubtedly helped to breathe new life into the old working-class tradition of France. What better proof is there than that the French Confederation of SCOP should, at its latest congress, have chosen as its president a former member of our group who, 25 years ago, was one of those idealists and madmen, struggling to create a labour community in one of the Paris suburbs.

At the time I myself was invited to visit the community (1) to give a course on the history of the working class to a strange audience which would inevitably have been described as eccentric. And the lecturer must surely have been as eccentric as his audience, although I hope that will not prevent you from listening to what I have to say. I am convinced that this kind of inter-cooperative experiment in a local community, regardless of whether it is urban or rural, could and should serve as a school for co-operative management personnel in the future.

2. Next there is the **micro-regional** level. In the developing countries a number of very specific problems have cropped up in

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(1) Desroche: "Le projet coopératif" (Paris, Editions ouvrières, 1975), pp. 20-22.

connection with the promotion of inter-cooperation at the micro-regional level. I am thinking, for example, of the "rassemblements de villages animés" in Niger, the development communes in Senegal, the Ujamaa villages in Tanzania and certain aspects of the "Zadrougas" in Yugoslavia, not to mention all we have to learn from the commune in China. I could list a good number of facts about these village or inter-village co-operatives that speak for their inter-cooperative multifunctionality. And facts of this kind are not restricted to developing countries alone, as we learned two years ago from an international symposium held in Haïfa on the villagisation of co-operative development - a villagisation which may develop into inter-cooperative micro-regionalisation or even regionalisation. Obviously, co-operative management, however sectoral or monofunctional it may be, cannot ignore such considerations at any level. It is precisely to overcome this danger of a possible lack of interest that a deliberate movement has been launched in France among regional co-operation groups to establish or re-establish links between sectors and levels in the same region.

3. As regards the **national** level, I wonder if much needs to be said about inter-cooperation. In Quebec you know as well as we do in France that this is a perennial aspiration which is never altogether fulfilled and which, where joint economic ventures are concerned, usually takes the form of moral alliances that are far more often of a defensive than of an offensive nature. Besides, in my country as in yours, the concepts of region or province, on the one hand, and of a single or confederate nation, on the other, are poles apart and potentially so explosive that discretion may well be the better part of valour.

4. Finally, at the **international** level, the points have been sufficiently argued by a panel of the recent congress. This question of co-operation between co-operatives in developing countries and co-operatives in developed countries is a perennial theme and yet it is still on the agenda, along with all the points that were gone over once again by the 25th ICA Congress in Warsaw in 1972 (1). If nothing else, we must not forget that, despite appearances and precedents, co-operation at the international level cannot be a one-way affair. When co-operatives from the developed countries come to the assistance of co-operatives in developing countries, they may and often do get something in return. While the latter may possibly benefit from the creativeness of the former, the former, by becoming better acquainted with the latter, may well experience a throw-back to their own youth and a reminder of where it all started from.

This inter-cooperative co-operation between non-governmental organisations within the rigid or flexible framework of the technical assistance kind of co-operation (between government organisations)

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(1) It is also an aspect of one of the two subjects dealt with by the 26th ICA Congress in Paris from 28 October to 1 November 1976 (Ed.).

also forms part of co-operative management, whether on balance it is a matter of receipts or disbursements. It would be a great pity for co-operative aspirations if this aspect of management was regarded as irrevocably superfluous, a matter of marginally philanthropic generosity or, in the final analysis, simply handed over to the politicians with the co-operative sector as a mere onlooker.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would just like to say that we are entering a whole sociological world as far as co-operative management is concerned. I remember the words of an old community pioneer from North America who devoted himself in the nineteenth century to a community which I shall not talk about here because it was a Fourier type of community which some might find altogether shocking. The gist of what he said was this: "We have made a major sortie into unknown territory". As a historian and geographer of co-operation, which is the standpoint I have tried to maintain here, I would be tempted to say that the co-operative world is largely unknown territory. And if co-operative management is looked at simultaneously in the light of its historical diversity, its geographical multiplicity and all the typological differences to which it gives rise and if all the complexity of the instrument panel which I have tried to describe is borne in mind, there still remains enough unexplored territory for me to be tempted - if only I had the time - to add yet another branch of management, brought to mind by my friend Lacour: management of the tasks to be fulfilled in order to explore this unknown territory more thoroughly and thus to get the better of it.

Finally, if I may be allowed to forget the past for a moment and look to the future, I would like to quote another passage which one of my teachers often used to cite when, long ago, I was young and my impatience knew no bounds. It is a passage which might sound like just a bit of bravado if it had not been spoken by our great poet, Arthur Rimbaud: "A day will surely dawn when, fortified by an irresistible patience, we shall enter the cities of splendour". Well then! Let us fortify ourselves with an irresistible patience and perhaps the day will dawn when we shall enter into the cities of splendour.

(Original in French)

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Congress of the ICA

XXVIth Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance

The XXVIth Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance was held in Paris from 28 September to 1 October 1976 at UNESCO House. One hundred and eight co-operative organisations from 51 countries and 4 regional or international co-operative organisations were represented by over 500 delegates.

In accordance with traditional practice, sessions of the auxiliary committees and of the working parties were held prior to the opening of the Congress. The reports prepared by the chairmen and the secretaries of these committees and working parties were submitted to the Congress as part of the overall report presented by the Central Committee on ICA activities for the period 1972-1976.

The Congress was opened on 28 September by Mr. Roger Kerinec, President of the International Co-operative Alliance, in the presence of Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of the French Republic, of Mr. Amadou M'Bow, Director-General of UNESCO, of Mr. Francis Blanchard, Director-General of the International Labour Office, as well as of several members of the French Government and Parliament. The texts of the addresses by Mr. Kerinec, President Giscard d'Estaing and Mr. Blanchard are appended to the present article.

Two major themes were placed before the Congress for discussion: ICA's Long-Term Programme of Work 1977-1980 and the promotion of collaboration between co-operatives.

Furthermore, the Congress was to elect its new Executive Committee and decide on the place and date of its next session.

There were over 150 interventions, in addition to the presentation of reports and of the speeches, a fact which demonstrates the active participation in the debates of representatives of co-operative organisations.

For the first time since its foundation, the International Co-operative Alliance adopted a 4-year programme of action, the necessity of which had already been underlined by the XXVth Congress held in October 1972 in Warsaw. The objective of the programme is to

List of ICA Congresses
1. Foundation Congress.
2. Participation. Agricultural Co-operation. International Relations.
3. Participation. Agricultural Co-operation. International Relations.
4. Participation. Wholesale Stores. International Relations.
5. Participation. Housing for Workers. International Peace.
6. Agricultural Co-operation. Credit. State.
7. Agricultural Co-operation. Wholesale Stores. Platform for Co-operative Socialism.
8. Inter-cooperative Relations. International Peace. Co-operatives and Trade Unions. International Co-operative Relations.
9. Inter-cooperative Relations (Thomas Report). Co-operative Neutrality.
10. Inter-cooperative Relations. Co-operation and Socialism.
11. Economic Policy.
12. The Rochdale Principles.
13. The Rochdale Principles. Co-operative and Economic Systems.
14. Co-operative Policy. Co-operation and Public Authorities.
15. Co-operation and Nationalisation.
16. Co-operative Policy.
17. International Co-operation.
18. Co-operation and Developing Countries (Watkins Report).
19. International Co-operation. Co-operation and Developing Countries.
20. International Co-operation. Co-operation and Developing Countries.
21. International Co-operation. Co-operation and Developing Countries.
22. Economic Integration. Developing Countries. Co-operative principles.
23. Co-operative Countries. Developing Countries. Contemporary Co-operative Democracy.
24. Co-operation and Multinational Corporations. Developing Countries. Collaboration between Co-operatives. Long-term programme 1977-1980.
1 1895 London
2 1896 Paris
3 1897 Delft
4 1900 Paris
5 1902 Manchester
6 1904 Budapest
7 1907 Cremona
8 1910 Hamburg
9 1913 Glasgow
10 1921 Basel
11 1924 Ghent
12 1927 Stockholm
13 1930 Vienna
14 1934 London
15 1937 Paris
16 1946 Zurich
17 1948 Prague
18 1951 Copenhagen
19 1954 Paris
20 1957 Stockholm
21 1960 Lausanne
22 1963 Bournemouth
23 1966 Vienna
24 1969 Hamburg
25 1972 Warsaw
26 1976 Paris

achieve greater efficiency in the work of the Alliance and to ensure that the priorities established for the next four years are relevant to the needs of co-operative movements throughout the world.

A special expanded sub-committee was created and held several meetings. Several specialised groups, such as the sub-committee on ICA's image and the two Regional Councils in Asia and Africa, were asked to make suggestions on the work programme; the views of auxiliary committees and working parties were also invited. The paper adopted by the Central Committee is in four parts. The introductory part gives the background of the exercise and examines the methodology adopted for the preparation of the paper; the second part narrates the current activities of the Alliance and its related bodies; the third part draws attention to some newly emerging issues which may be relevant to the co-operative movement; finally, the fourth part outlines a Programme of Work of the period 1977-1980 and the document concludes by suggesting certain priorities and gives their approximate financial implications.

Among the new emerging issues, the following four are identified as major problems to which the Co-operative Movement must find appropriate solutions: Environment, Energy, Population, Food.

As regards environment, several ICA auxiliary committees and working parties, i.e. Housing, Insurance, Fisheries, Consumer, Press, have already expressed their interest; ad hoc meetings of these bodies will be held to help in the formulation of ICA's point of view which could be communicated to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

In the field of energy, ICA's role will be to publicize the role of existing co-operative organisations in this field, to strengthen contacts between them through the International Co-operative Petroleum Association (ICPA), and emphasise the need for concerted action at world forums.

ICA is not qualified to deal directly with matters relating to population. However, such problems could be kept under review and discussions undertaken as appropriate, in collaboration with other organisations of the United Nations family such as the ILO and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), with emphasis on aspects such as nutrition, health care, etc.

Finally, as regards the shortage of food in the world, agricultural and consumer co-operatives have a particular role to play and should accentuate their efforts in this direction, with the assistance of ICA's Agricultural Co-operation Committee and relevant UN agencies.

ICA's Programme of Work for 1977-1980 covers the following 10 essential points, in addition to the four major problems already mentioned above:

- The need to improve ICA's image: it is essential that the international character of the Movement be emphasised and that its interest for the world's major problems be clearly shown. National Liaison Committees will be established in national movements as instruments for encouraging discussion on ICA matters and as additional channels of communication; where possible, existing machinery will be used. These committees will not affect the constitutional powers of ICA's existing bodies (Auxiliary Committees and Working Parties).

- The need to pursue efforts towards the establishment of lasting peace and security. The Alliance will attempt, from time to time, and on carefully selected issues, to have authoritative pronouncements made by the Central Committee and the Congress, and such pronouncements will be given wide publicity. The Alliance will accelerate its work in those fields which will reduce the causes of friction (global imbalances in the distribution of wealth, activities of aggressive profit-making bodies, etc.); encourage the movement to undertake tasks which demonstrate in a practical way, the usefulness of regional and inter-regional ventures; and finally extend considered support to the activities of the United Nations and its specialised agencies.

- The need to increase INCA's membership and coverage. A more active policy of inviting co-operative organisations to consider joining the Alliance will be pursued. Where no apex organisations exist, the ICA will provide necessary advice, especially in developing countries, for the creation of suitable bodies which could apply for admission. Finally, in the case of developing countries, the ICA will consider adopting concessionary rates of subscription for an interim period to encourage organisations to join the Alliance.

- Co-operative education. Programmes of member education for non-professional leaders will continue to be launched and due attention will be given to those aspects which help to improve the efficiency of personnel working in co-operative societies. As far as possible, and where necessary, collaboration will be sought from outside agencies (universities, business schools, professional bodies, etc.). As a long-term measure, consideration may be given to the creation of an international co-operative training institute or university. Efforts will continue to be made to arrange systematic interchange of information on educational aids, techniques, national programmes, etc. and to extend the programme of exchange of educationalists and leaders.

- Development of the co-operative press and publications. A re-examination of ICA's regular publications will be undertaken with a view to producing a Review of International Co-operation better fitted to the requirements, and to achieving a rational division of tasks between the various publications of the Alliance. As a long-term measure, consideration will be given to the creation of a Press Centre at ICA Headquarters in response to the broad requirements of co-operative journalists.

- Research. The programme of work will include the steady monitoring of important areas of co-operative activities, and the following important subjects will be kept under constant review: structural changes in co-operative movements, member participation, relations with the State, co-operative legislation, taxation, co-operation among co-operatives, financing of co-operatives, development of workers' productive societies, development of inter-cooperative commercial activities, multinational enterprises, etc. The preparation of the Research Directory will be pursued.

- Youth. The Alliance will provide further opportunities for exchange of experiences through appropriate means.

- Auxiliary committees and working parties. Their activities should be further developed. There is need for achieving greater co-ordination between ICA Secretariat and the auxiliary bodies and amond the auxiliary bodies themselves. For this purpose, a meeting of the Chairmen and Secretaries and the Authorities of the Alliance will be instituted. Members of the Executive Committee will be asked to participate increasingly in meetings of auxiliary bodies; conversely, the Executive Committee will invite chairmen and secretaries of relevant auxiliary committees to its meetings when appropriate. As a long-term measure, the activities of auxiliary committees, where appropriate, will be increasingly regionalised; this will ensure greater participation in their meetings.

- ICA Activities in Developing Countries. The ICA will continue to emphasise and implement its programmes through its Regional Offices. Where such offices do not exist, programmes will be planned, in consultation with members of the ICA and other co-operative organisations. Emphasis will continue to be placed on education and training to improve the efficiency of co-operative societies under active member control. Initiatives will be undertaken to create a favourable climate in which co-operative and inter-cooperative trade could be promoted. Finally, investigations will be conducted into the feasibility of creating an ICA focal point for West Africa.

- Collaboration with the United Nations and Specialised Agencies. Emphasis will be placed on the elaboration of long-ranging programmes of co-operation with UN specialised agencies, the joint organisation of important seminars, world conference, etc. Attempts will be made to influence the policies of UN and its specialised agencies to promote co-operative development. ICA's representation in New York and Geneva will be strengthened. Finally, every opportunity will be sought to elaborate joint programmes with Non-Governmental Organisations and to influence their policy in support of co-operative movements.

An approximate estimate of the financial requirements for the implementation of the Programme of Work has been established. Steps should be taken to increase ICA's financial resources either through

increasing the subscriptions to be paid by joining organisations, or by increasing the number of organisations which potentially could be members of the ICA or by using direct contributions for the execution of special programmes.

With reference to collaboration between co-operatives, the Congress, on several occasions, suggested that, on the one hand efforts be made to encourage greater contact between different types of co-operatives within one country, thus leading to some increase in trade between them and possibly to joint ventures; it stated on the other hand, that at the international level, the collaboration between co-operatives should result in an increased volume of international co-operative trade, a greater collaboration at the production level, the joint financing of common ventures and, finally, the interchange of experiences in all relevant fields.

In conclusion, the Congress adopted the following motions, which are reproduced hereafter:

. Motion on Peace

. Motion on the Long-Term Programme 1976-1980

. Motion on Collaboration Between Co-operatives

. Motion on the Tasks of the Co-operative Press

. Motion on Standards for Non-Food Products

. Motion on Technical Assistance and Co-operative Housing

. Motion on Tourism and the Co-operative Movement

. Motion on the Helsinki Conference and European Security and Co-operation

. Motion on Women and the Co-operative Movement.

The Congress adopted a certain number amendments to the Rules and Standing Orders of the Alliance; extracts from these rules and standing orders are reproduced hereafter.

The Congress also elected the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the 13 members of the Executive Committee which is now composed as follows, in addition to Messrs. Kerinec (President, France), Klimov (First Vice-President, USSR) and Søiland (Second Vice-President, Norway):

Messrs. Whitehead (United Kingdom)

Kohler (Switzerland)

Dryer (United States, CLUSA)

Miyawaki (Japan)

Janczyk (Poland)

Galetti (Italy, Lega)

Kovalcik (Czechoslovakia)

Daneau (Canada)

Paulig (Federal Republic of Germany)

Thedin (Sweden)

Hamalainen (Finland)

Rauter (Austria)

Musundi (Kenya)

One of the important decisions reached by the Congress was to recognise Spanish as one of the Alliance's official languages.

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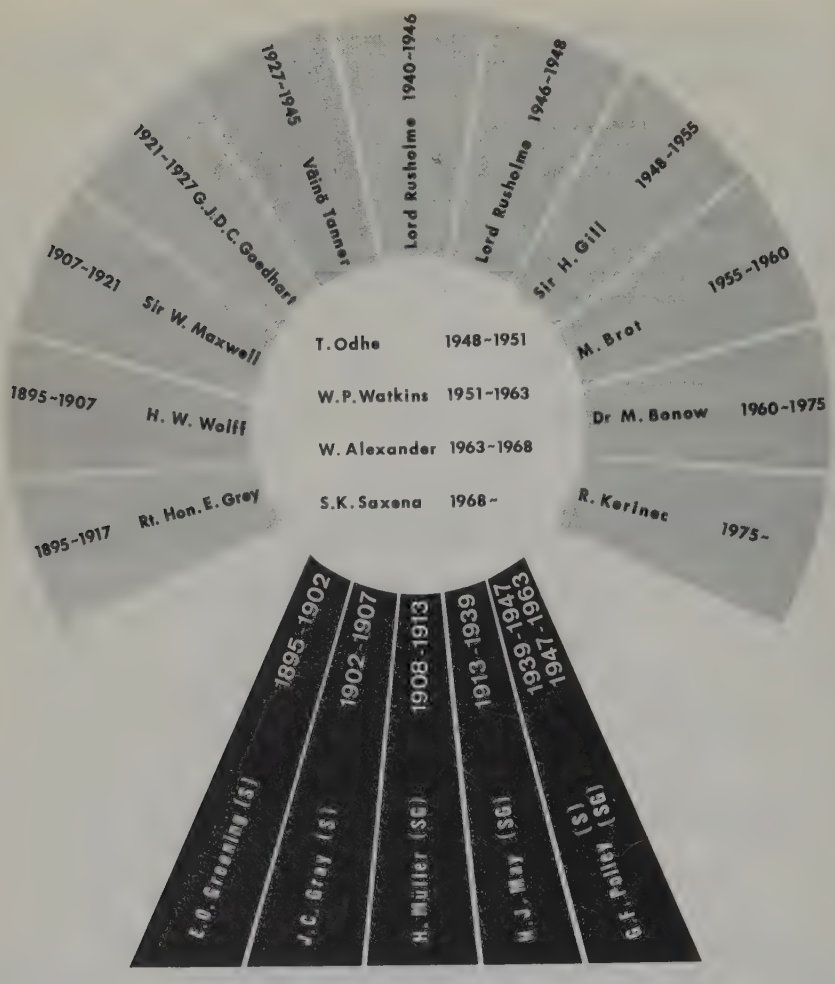
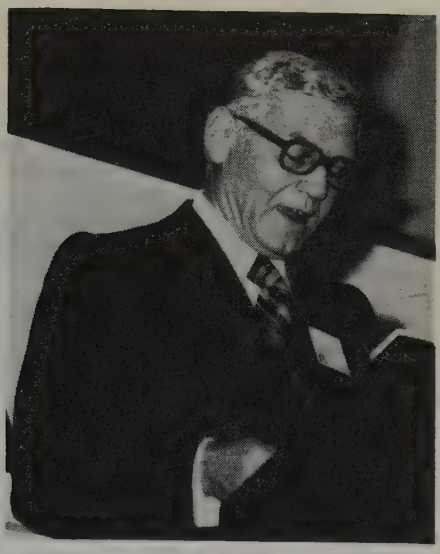
ACI - ICA 1895 - 1975



Directeurs - Directors - Directores

Présidents - Chairmen - Presidentes

Secrétaires - Secrétaires généraux
Secretaries - General Secretaries
Secretarios - Secretarios Generales



R. Kerinec

His Excellency,
the President of the Republic,
Honourable Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Friends Delegates,

We who represent the co-operative movements of five continents are once again reunited.

It is now four years since Warsaw, and it is Paris that now welcomes us, as it welcomed the Alliance in 1896 - 80 years ago - and in 1900, 1937 and 1954.

We are once more reunited, and this will naturally be an opportunity to assess the development of co-operation in the world through the activities of the Alliance.

Our Director, Dr. S.K. Saxena, will give you a summing up, which will reflect the work largely carried out by him and his colleagues, under the Presidency of my predecessor, Mauritz Bonow. You will be able to judge for yourselves to what extent this faithfully reflects the decisions we made together.

Being a newly elected president, and one who has only played a secondary role in carrying out this work, I can assert that the past years have seen a remarkable growth in awareness of the International Co-operative Alliance, both within every co-operative movement in every country and within international, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. I would like to thank them publicity for their understanding of our cause and for their material and moral support.

Doubtless, these results are due to the personal work of our two friends I have just named, who have increased the contacts and even the collaboration with ILO, UNESCO, FAO, UNIDO and the other UN organisations which, thanks to them, will henceforth be aware of co-operative ideology, and they will have been able to measure the extent of the work that they have inspired.

These results are also due to better co-ordination of the work accomplished by the auxiliary committees of our Alliance which have intensified their activities and whose role should not be underrated.

Our Director will comment - however, briefly, as we have decided not to dwell on the past - on the recent history of the Alliance. But we are gathered here primarily to discuss the future.

We will do this by concentrating our thoughts on two subjects that we have chosen to discuss at Congress: the planning of our activities, and collaboration between co-operatives. In other words, we intend to ask ourselves where we want to go and how we can get there together, that is, all forms of co-operatives gathered here, regardless of the political systems under which they carry out their activities.

One of our vice-presidents, Mr. A. Klimov, together with Mr. Lloyd Harrison, will be presenting the second subject, and the Central Committee has asked me to open the debate on the first one: the ICA Work Programme. I will come back to this at the appropriate time but today I will be content with saying that this effort of planning should be taken as an opportunity to define policy, instead of our being content with adding from time to time at random to our activities, and sometimes even activities that are marginal to the work of the Alliance.

This is then the agenda for our Congress, and now that you know it, I shall confine myself to a few introductory remarks. I am now going to make use of the president's traditional privilege to present to you some marginal reflections for which only I personally am responsible.

Naturally, these reflections have a bearing on our movement's current preoccupations and on the conditions under which it could contribute towards the establishment of a world that is more equitable through greater solidarity and participation.

Do the Statutes of our Alliance not stipulate that co-operators want to build a society "organised in the interests of the whole community and based upon mutual self-help"?

In order to reply to the question I am asking myself here, I will recall again who we are and what we want to do.

Who are we?

Well, we are men and women who have chosen to demonstrate that we ourselves are capable of dealing with our own problems and, of creating and managing together our own enterprises.

More than a century ago we created the first co-operatives as a reaction against the abuses of a system based on the individual pursuit of profit, which brought about a brutal change in older

forms of solidarity. We have always preferred the virtues of working together to the brawny pleasures of the struggle for life.

Those who founded these first societies did not seek to make profit at the expense of others and for this reason they invented rules setting out the distribution of profits based on the amount contributed towards joint success, and establishing a collective and indivisible patrimony. They were not seeking either to exercise power to the detriment of others and this is why they laid down rules based on the equality of members, which produced the incredible challenge of applying democracy in the field of economics, where it was so badly applied - and is still so badly applied today - in the field of politics and in so few countries.

Others observing these initial attempts, which seemed to have no future, looked at them not only with scepticism but also with suspicion, and called them utopians.

They were everyday utopians, answers one of our friends, Antoine Antoni, who did prove that utopia had, one might say, a social function.

For there is proof. Co-operatives exist. Starting as economic and social experimental laboratories, they have gradually acquired a place in society even under very different skies and heavens. Already in 1895 when they had barely been set up, they, or rather their creators, showed the importance they placed on relations between peoples by creating an organisation - our organisation - which today is one of the oldest and most powerful of international non-governmental organisations.

Since then, co-operators from all countries have forged links over borders that are more than just expressions of goodwill and good intentions; they are links that have allowed them to exchange experiences, and even to undertake activities jointly in fields as important as production, distribution and consumption of foodstuffs and everyday goods, even petroleum products, construction and administration of housing, insurance, credit, agriculture, banking, fishing, leisure, etc.

And it is on the basis of this accumulated experience and thanks to the devotion of so many men and women, that co-operators have wanted to express their views on the problems confronting our world.

First of all, as I have said, they wanted to transform the world, and also because by uniting large sections of the population of the countries where they were developing, co-operatives could not - even if they wanted - escape from the fears and hopes that their members feel and express.

They therefore naturally became preoccupied with problems that went beyond the framework of their daily lives and they are today

preoccupied with - and this will be discussed during Congress - the depletion of food and energy resources and the dangers threatening the environment and the health of the people of the world.

This does not mean that co-operation alone is the infallible solution to these crises. Alas no! But it does mean that it believes it can make an irreplaceable contribution to their solution.

Besides, I should like co-operatives to show in a more striking way than they do at present that they have the capacity to undertake on a world-wide level actions of such range as to demonstrate another method of managing matters, another way of tackling problems than those which are today practised by gigantic national or multinational private enterprises of which the least one can say is that their interests do not always coincide with those of the people.

That seems to me particularly true in the field about which I should like to devote my last remarks - that of aid to developing countries. This is doubtless the most serious problem of all.

Nobody can state that he holds the solution to it. At this point, even the notion of development is open to question.

However, everyone recognises the failure of a certain policy which was founded on exporting present values from rich countries, values linked to a civilisation which does not correspond to the needs of countries whose development is lagging behind.

Everyone also agrees that the gap is widening, at least between the so-called Fourth World countries and the others. And the international community is inevitably sinking into what the President of the French Republic called at an UNCTAD meeting a "sort of placid resignation". And the population of the so-called rich countries is becoming disinterested in this aid which it feels does not achieve its objectives; that population agrees to give, but hardly to share.

I have neither the necessary competence, nor the necessary time for an analysis, or even for a brief review of the opinions expressed by those who know, or believe they know, how to overcome this resignation. I will only state that the need for a New International Economic Order is recognised by most nations, I imagine, because the present order - and some would call it the disorder - is not the right one and the outlines of this New Order are beginning to be perceived.

I will also state that the new vocabulary used by those who are trying to define it rings agreeably in the ears of co-operators, and is now a question of strategy for all countries, of basing growth on satisfying the needs of the people and of helping people to help themselves.

These are ideas that we have for long been advocating - one only needs to re-read Mr. Watkins's report adopted by our Paris Congress

in 1954 to be convinced of it - these are ideals that each co-operative movement tries to apply, that the ICA is trying to promote, particularly through the work of its regional offices in Asia and in Africa.

These are ideals for which we are prepared to strengthen our organisation and our work, but only on certain conditions which, in conclusion, I should like to explain. For it is a fact that the co-operative movement too has known many setbacks, and I must say that we have been disappointed not to have seen in the poor countries a real explosion of co-operatives.

Today we know that co-operation is not a panacea; is not a miracle solution, is not the royal route. And it seems to me that before blaming others for our setbacks, we should ask ourselves - which we are beginning to do - if the aid given by our Alliance or national movements to co-operatives in developing countries was in accordance with our means and if it was well adapted to the situation of the co-operatives in question.

It seems to me we should ask ourselves if we have not been somewhat too hasty in enlarging our numbers on paper, of registering births, sometimes premature, without taking care to assure ourselves that these were really viable co-operatives.

It seems to me that those listening to our ideas have not always been won over and that we should in future be much more exacting.

Everyone knows it, everyone says it and repeats it, but everyone forgets that independence has to be deserved and has to be earned every day. But it is also true that the setbacks encountered by co-operatives were not all attributable to them because the conditions that they require for success have not been met.

The first of these conditions is that the efforts deployed by co-operatives form part of an overall development strategy. Isolated from such a strategy, these efforts will be without future since they would remain marginal even if the initiative succeeded. But it is also necessary - and this is the second condition - for Governments to consider co-operation as a true instrument for social change and not as a means of reinforcing the ruling social classes by helping the strongest to help themselves.

It is in effect necessary for co-operatives to be real co-operatives, that is to say, organisations which are animated and inspired by the people and not only by a few officials, even if they are deeply convinced of the virtues of co-operation. Because if co-operation is not lived or even wanted by the population, it will not feel engaged in it, and when the attempt fails, nobody will worry about it and nobody will do anything to defend it. And this failure of something which was not in fact part of the co-operative movement casts discredit on co-operative ideas.

In fact, for too many governments co-operative enterprises only appear as a means amongst many others to attain their ends. This explains why we too often see co-operative movements that have been dissolved or nationalised. This happens both when they have failed and when they have succeeded too well, for it is tempting to take over co-operative banks, co-operative insurance societies, credit societies, once they have accumulated considerable funds.

In saying this, I do not want to say that all collaboration between governments and co-operative movements is impossible. Experience has proven the contrary and it is certain that in developing countries, governments have a major role to play in accompanying the first steps of co-operatives in order to help them to organise and to acquire staff capable of managing them.

But it must be said to governments - and co-operators must tell the governments - all governments - that co-operation cannot be imposed on people, but in order to be itself and thus efficient, co-operation must be lived, and I repeat, that it is on this condition that co-operation can in all independence contribute to a cultural and economic evolution without social disintegration, that it can develop confidence amongst co-operators, that it can mobilise the energies of the people - a mobilisation which is necessary for all development of joint action for the benefit of the community.

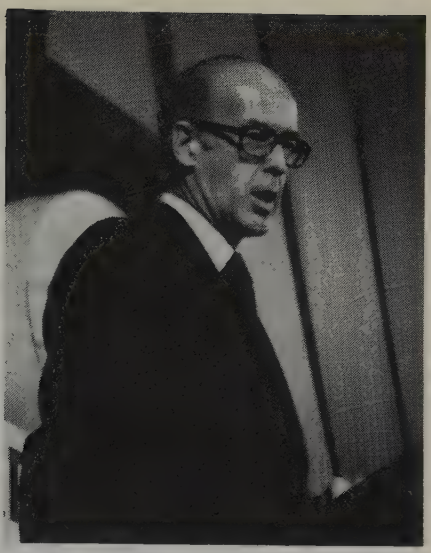
Mr. President, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends who are here as delegates, this is what I thought I should say to you in opening the Congress of our International Co-operative Alliance. This Alliance, which has succeeded in getting through all the crises our century has known, sometimes narrowly avoiding splits and divisions.

We may well ask to what we owe this permanence, this unity that has always been preserved. Perhaps it is due to the magic of words of which we have always wanted to believe that they had for us all the same meaning. Perhaps also because the Alliance did not bring together representatives of governments but representatives of millions of men and women who have chosen co-operation.

But I believe that we owe this permanence, this long life particularly to the effort we have always made to understand each other; by accepting the right of each to be different, by congratulating ourselves that people of different nationalities living in different countries, each with their own history, geography, traditions, standards of living, and ways of life, have been able to understand each other and even to build together because they had a common belief in the virtues of the co-operative form or organisation, one of the rare forms that sacrifice neither freedom, nor social justice to economic and technological progress.

This is the common belief and a common spirit in which I am persuaded our Congress will take place; it is the spirit with which we would like the world of tomorrow to be suffused.

(Original in French)



V. Giscard d'Estaing

Mr. President,
Mr. Director-General,
Honourable Ministers,
Co-operators,

I should first like to say to the Director-General of UNESCO how happy I am that this meeting permits me to pay a visit to his organisation, and to underline - on this occasion - the importance that France attaches to culture in all its aspects. We are happy to be the host country of the International Organisation which devotes its efforts to its development, because we know well that the final progress of humanity will be accomplished through education, through science and through culture.

We live in a time of interdependence among mankind and the progressive global growth of problems. If in one part of our planet drought ruins the harvest, if a raw material becomes scarce, then the channels of trade will alter, the prices will rise, currencies float, and investment and employment be affected in all countries.

This solidarity of mankind, at the level of the human species, is in reality a blessing and is an acquisition of our times. However it will pose most difficult problems to the politicians of the various countries, who do not yet possess the necessary structure for joint planning and decision-making on a world-wide level in order to find solutions.

If, at the invitation of your President, Mr. Roger Kerinec, I wanted to participate in the opening of this 26th Congress, it is precisely because I see your International Co-operative Alliance as one of those structures which can contribute to the search for the new international economic order.

This ambition is, I believe, within the resources of your Alliance, which proclaims with legitimate pride - though the figures are somewhat debateable, or so you told me, Monsieur Kerinec - the federal power of 326 million co-operators from 65 countries, and we are happy that for the fifth time in your history, your Alliance has decided to carry out its work in Paris, under judicious French chairmanship and at the Palace of UNESCO. I want on this occasion to address to each one of you a personal welcome, and wishes for a pleasant stay in the capital of our country which has at all times sought to provide welcoming shores for ideas of human progress.

However, the brief speech I would like to make to you is not only that of a host greeting visitors; I wish to speak as a Head of State, the President of the French Republic, asking an important organisation - the International Co-operative Alliance - to bring its contribution to the solution of the common problems of our times.

It seems to me that this contribution could have a twofold nature: at national level, to provide an example for economic and social progress; at international level, to act as a privileged instrument for development.

First then, at the national level: thought is being given in a large number of countries, and I would say at present in all countries, to finding a better content to working life, and to turning enterprises into real human communities. Each country has its own specific methods, and it would be naive to believe that any example can be automatically exported from one nation to another. I believe also that it would be equally naive to think that it is possible to invent an abstract formula, based on principles and not on reality, whose multitude of utopian qualities would be equal to the rareness of its usefulness.

In this connection, the Co-operative Movement presents two distinguishing features which confer on it unquestionable value as an example: first, it exists; secondly, it exists nearly everywhere.

The fact of its existence, and the long history of its tradition in a country like France, and many others, bear witness to the concrete possibility of humanising the working environment and of creating a community of working men in the economy.

Co-operative enterprises are usually born of local initiatives and in general preserve human dimensions, thus constituting efficient centres of resistance against the exodus of workers and the devitalisation of rural areas. As they are neither branches nor subsidiaries of national or multinational groups, they also have a genuine autonomy of management.

The co-operative system is thus the opposite of centralisation and bureaucracy.

The co-operator is not a man who remains passive, who only leans on others. At a time when it is general for men to try to unload their responsibilities on others, the co-operative movement offers a positive conception of responsibility.

The co-operator is also a man who refuses to accept the cleavage between producer and consumer in seeking to cover the whole range from production to marketing, he turns the consumer into an ally or a partner and not an enemy of the producer.

The co-operator is finally a democratic man: this characteristic is particularly expressed by the famous principle born out of the co-operative movement; one man, one vote, - which attempts to provide co-operative power with an organisation which limits the risks of internal tension.

The French, who have so long participated in the aspirations of mankind towards democracy, owed it to themselves to participate in the Co-operative Movement. They did it more than a century ago by developing workers' productive co-operatives, low cost housing co-operatives, distributive co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, banks and financial institutions. Thus the largest bank in France is a co-operative, "le Crédit agricole".

They have also done this on the level of ideas. As you know, it is one of the special passions of our people to philosophise on everything and to try to rationalise everything. Co-operation has not escaped this passion, and it was at the College de France that Charles Gide created a course on the Co-operative Movement, assigning to it the aim of what he called "social transformation not individual salvation".

I said that the second distinguishing feature of the Co-operative Movement is that it exists nearly everywhere - in the east as well as in the west. This a matter of a original philosophy of economic activity and of business which has been developed, protected from any particularly notable political or ideological dependence. It is thus clearly distinct both from capitalist enterprise and form a collective enterprise, from the liberal economic system and the centralised economic system.

This fact arises without doubt from the remarkable independence which your movement has always demonstrated and which will remain, I am sure, in the future the mainspring for its inspiration.

After you I should like to say, Mr. President, a world about the contribution which co-operation can bring to the problem of development.

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Politics are a little like grammar: the power lies in words. You do not have things as objects, on the one hand, and words on the other: you only have words associated with things, and each language has modelled this association between words and things in the form of its individual conception of life.

This also applies to the French language, and it is not by chance that the word "co-operation" had a double meaning: that of the co-operative system, and that of aid to developing countries.

If there are many French ministers present here today, I could have brought with me the Minister for Co-operation. And yet he would not have been yours. But, when he travels around the nations of the world and particularly in the African States, towards which France feels bonds so close that they could almost be called a blood relationship, is the "co-operation" which we propose so very different from yours? I do not think so.

When we state that co-operation between developed countries and developing countries must consist not in transposing or exporting our own development schemes but in "helping others to help themselves", are we not repeating one of the key phrases of your movement?

It is in this spirit that the French Government took the initiative, as you recalled just now Mr. President, of creating the North-South Conference which, at this very moment, is continuing its research and preparation into a new international economic order. Every country, whatever its wealth or ideology, must feel concern that such an economic order should arise through discussion and joint planning between countries and not through forcibly imposed relationships.

Listening to the aspirations which have been just now expressed within these walls, I can state that I am pleased to declare in your presence that the co-operative model seems to me to respond well to the aspirations of many developing countries.

Much has been written, as you know, to show that their ancestral structure, with the habit of collective living, of communal labour, the tradition of sharing, have favoured the springing up of co-operatives. Mutuality would thus have preceded the written word in their ancestral structures.

This idea, however useful, should be treated with caution.

The traditional structures are not favourable to an apprenticeship for individual freedom.

The co-operative system demands of its members the willingness to act by themselves, for themselves. It takes for granted an enterprising spirit.

So it will be up to your 26th Congress to delineate the necessary principles for action, so that the co-operative movement can develop in those countries without succumbing to the perils which consist in those movements being taken over or centralised by bureaucracy. Thus you will reinforce the solid content of your Executive Committee's decision to make 1970-1980 the "Co-operative Development Decade".

The lines of action that you will need to define will naturally follow the course drawn up in 1974 by the United Nations General Assembly calling upon Governments to establish a new international economic order.

Again, your International Alliance has set up those two offices in New Delhi and Moshi, working effectively to assist co-operative movements in Asia and Africa.

The efficiency of this action, and this will by my final remark, is in effect achieved by a rapprochement between co-operative bodies and Governments.

Governments generally provide assistance to developing countries either through official channels, or by stimulating commercial and industrial activities which look more or less like export operations.

However, it is becoming more and more apparent that these forms of aid or credit, without sufficient local participation, without being a part of the economy of the nations, do not achieve their aim.

To improve the quality and effectiveness of their assistance the donor governments will have to multiply their stages of communication (information, preparation, transmission) in order to provide resources which truly correspond to the real needs of the partner states.

Among these stages it is perfectly possible to include co-operative organisations, as has been shown already by the measures taken by several European countries in collaboration with your International Co-operative Alliance.

But in order to use the co-operative channel it is assumed that each Government should recognise the importance of the co-operative sector, by encouraging its development, and I can tell you that France will do this.

In our reform of industry we have included measures favouring the co-operative sector. A bill will soon be submitted to the French Parliament, prepared by the Government, to facilitate the development of workers' productive co-operative societies and to increase the real possibilities for workers to participate in their management.

But Governments must also be prepared to use the international co-operative network, without impairing its liberty, to distribute or receive development aid. And on this matter too, I will tell you that France is disposed to do this, and will do it as soon as your movement is sufficiently organised at international level to offer the necessary guarantees of effectiveness, and I believe that this 26th Congress held in Paris could be the occasion for reflection and useful proposals on this theme.

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Co-operators,

In the world of today, which is getting smaller, following a famous saying and the international character of which is growing, the strength of the co-operative movement is precisely to have known both to preserve its traditions, maintain its independence, and question itself on the future. This will permit it to address to mankind the message of hope and progress which is yours and which I hope, on the occasion of this Congress, it will hear.

(Original in French)

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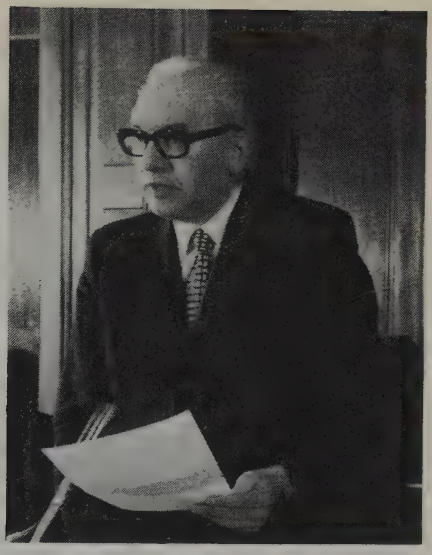

F. Blanchard

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In inviting me to address your 26th Congress here in UNESCO, where my colleague Mr. M'Bow has offered us his usual warm and courteous welcome, you have given me a privilege and a pleasure which I feel the more keenly in that I am aware of the great traditions to which I am linked by virtue of my presence on this rostrum.

I am thinking of the ideals which are shared by the co-operative movement and the International Labour Organisation.

I am thinking of Albert Thomas.

I am thinking of the international action which we have been pursuing jointly for so long and of the need for developing it further.

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The principles which inspire us are very similar in many ways. This is hardly to be wondered at, since they are based on social realities and on the permanent needs of man at work.

It seems to me that any soundly conceived social policy must lie at the confluence of two streams, which have dominated history by turns and have sometimes flowed in opposite directions.

On the one hand there are the aspirations of the worker as an individual to more freedom, more responsibility in his work, linked with the movement of solidarity uniting the poor of the earth in their struggle to eliminate poverty and improve their condition.

In the realms of philosophy, morality and economics, ancient Greece, Christianity, the Renaissance and the French Revolution were to play their part in the assertion and emancipation of the human personality and in the affirmation of its uniqueness and its dignity.

The other stream takes its source from collective forms of organisation such as the tribe, the clan, and the guilds and corporations of the Middle Ages, and from the needs brought to light by the appalling conditions of workers at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. It was then, with the Equitable Pioneers of Rochdale, that solidarity, unity, mutual aid and the joining of forces in a common task found a high level of expression.

Professor Georges Lasserre has admirably highlighted these main tendencies of the workers' movement, and has shown how co-operatives have enabled them to be reconciled and amalgamated for creative purposes.

The same desire to promote both solidarity and freedom inspired those who set up the International Labour Organisation at the end of the First World War.

Right from its origins the Organisation devoted itself to the defence of man and his rights. It also offered workers an ideal international framework within which fruitful dialogue with governments and employers was in due course to develop.

Albert Thomas, the first Director of the International Labour Office, was to give a decisive impetus to collaboration between the co-operative movement and the International Labour Organisation. Himself a co-operator, he endeavoured to extend his activities as a national militant to the international scene.

Right from the start he had remarked - and I quote his words - that "through its inherent virtues, through the harmonious synthesis which it can bring about between the necessary development of the individual personality and the equal necessity for collective action, the co-operative association can serve as a model for the union of our restless and divided nations, and for the building of a single economy in which the conditions for the development of each will depend on the safety of all".

Accordingly, as early as 1921, when he had been a member of your Central Committee for a year, he established links between your Alliance and the International Labour Office, within which he had already set up a co-operative branch in March 1920.

As is well known, the aspirations of your Alliance towards international co-operation manifested themselves at a very early stage, and you soon felt the need for what you have termed "co-operation between co-operatives".

It is therefore hardly surprising that relations between the Alliance and the ILO, based on such principles and such antecedents, have been so fruitful.

I shall not relate their history today, but, since I am addressing your for the first time, I should like to say how much importance I attach to our co-operation and how much I hope to see it develop.

Our joint action covers a vast field and extends in many directions, since at the present time voices are being increasingly raised in favour of the establishment of a new international economic order.

In this context the ILO convened a World Employment Conference in June this year, at which the Government, Workers' and Employers' delegates of its 132 member States stressed the imperative necessity of satisfying the basic needs of the poorest population groups.

The Conference recalled that mass poverty, particularly in developing countries, was the major problem of our times. It stressed that the present situation could not be improved unless profound transformations took place in economic relationships, and affirmed that the purpose of such economic changes should be to transform the social situation of the workers. Finally, the Conference emphasised that if attempts to achieve this were to fail, the outlook for the future of mankind as a whole would be very bleak.

Faced with such a challenge and with an undertaking of this magnitude, co-operatives have an important and well-defined role to play if, as Albert Thomas said, it is true that co-operation is "the pre-condition for a national and international economy organised not with a view to profit but with a view to the satisfaction of needs".

Our hope that the co-operative movement may take this path is the more justified in that the concepts which inspired the committee set up to reformulate co-operative principles might perfectly well be applied to the establishment of a new world order. I might add that, by striking out resolutely in this direction, the co-operative movement would demonstrate the injustice of the accusation sometimes made against it, namely that it tends to favour the "haves" but can do nothing to improve the position of the "have-nots", particularly in rural areas. The World Employment Conference has stressed the role that co-operatives might play in that respect.

The objectives are thus perfectly clear. We must now seize the opportunity to harmonise our programmes and to ensure that our action is complementary.

One of the many tasks before your Congress is that of fixing the Alliance's work programme for 1977 to 1980. You will doubtless note with interest that the ILO Long-Term Plan covers virtually the same period: 1976 to 1980. This fact is no doubt of significance.

The projected activities of the International Labour Organisation have been grouped around the number of areas of main emphasis which are closely related to your own concerns: mass poverty, employment and training; industrial relations, social security, and human rights. You will no doubt wish, in determining the scope of your activities, to take account of the ILO Long-Term Plan.

If, however, our co-operation is to be effective, it should not be limited to harmonising our programmes. It must be institutionally strengthened and undertaken using the means at our disposal for our everyday activities.

Firstly, the work of the various instances in our two organisations would gain from being better co-ordinated at the national level at a time when decentralisation of our activities is one of our major preoccupations.

It would be most useful if co-operators could organise themselves in such a way as to make known their views systematically to our three categories of constituent: governments, workers and employers. It would be advisable in this respect if co-operators could group themselves into national committees to act as their spokesmen. This would ensure that the concerns of the co-operative movement would be more faithfully reflected in the ILO.

In another field, although the group of consultants on co-operation has now been set up, I feel that closer links might be maintained between some of your auxiliary committees and the various committees of the ILO; your organisation might make fuller use of the possibilities offered by the full consultative status which the ILO grants only to five major international occupational associations.

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Only constant day-by-day co-operation can, however, produce concrete results. I can distinguish three fields in which it might be intensified: standard-setting activities, research and technical co-operation.

To take standard-setting activities first, you rightly insist on the need for constant improvement of co-operative legislation, since it constitutes the bedrock of your relations with the State. Our organisation is also working towards this goal, and here I might recall the provisions of the Co-operatives (Developing Countries)

Recommendation, adopted by our Conference in 1966, the very same year in which your Hamburg Congress was held.

However, the ILO standard-setting activities go beyond the purely co-operative framework to cover Conventions and Recommendations relating to different aspects of man's work. Accordingly, the ILO drafts texts which are of concern to the great majority of co-operators. I should like to see co-operators make an increasingly important contribution to the ILO's standard-setting work.

In the field of research, you all know the contribution made to co-operative doctrine by Dr. Fauquet, the first Chief of the ILO Co-operative Branch. I have no doubt that contributions of equal quality can be made for our mutual benefit. If the efforts of co-operators in this field were to take the concrete form of a world co-operative university, the ILO would welcome its creation and would endeavour to establish close links with it.

Finally, to speak of technical co-operation, I agree with you on the need to avoid overlapping or dispersal of effort, since our resources are far from adequate to enable us to meet our considerable needs. As you know, at the request of governments, the institutions of the United Nations system undertake action in favour of co-operative development. Do you not feel that the co-operative movements which have made the most progress should take concrete steps in favour of those of developing countries, in the fields of commerce, finance and training, so as to ensure that the efforts undertaken within technical co-operation projects are maintained and the hopes which have been raised are not disappointed? Co-operative movements would thus be applying the principle of co-operation between co-operatives for the benefit of the weaker movements. Such assistance has been offered in some cases, but not always. It should become the general rule.

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In conclusion, I should like to express the wish that the work of our Congress may enable you to formulate and implement a plan of action which will strengthen the special links which history has forged within the Alliance and the ILO, so as to build a more just world order. You will not be surprised that I have placed stress on relations between the ILO and the International Co-operative Alliance. While I have taken great pleasure in doing so, I am equally gratified to be able to speak from this rostrum on behalf of the agencies of the United Nations system. As you know, other specialised agencies of the United Nations carry on important activities in the field of co-operatives. This is particularly the case with the United Nations itself, FAO, UNIDO and UNESCO. They, like the ILO, would like to strengthen their ties with your Alliance, and I know that you will make every endeavour to do so. You have permanent access to each of these organisations at the highest level. This is facilitated by the

existence of the Joint Committee for the Promotion of Aid to Co-operatives (COPAC). It would thus be a relatively simple matter for you to harmonise your programmes with those of the United Nations agencies and to co-operate even more closely with them in the fields of standard-setting, research and technical co-operation. By making a wider and more systematic use of the facilities offered by these organisations, you will always find them ready to offer you their services.

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Ladies and gentlemen, the prospects offered by the 26th Congress are in keeping with the vitality of your national co-operative movements. I am convinced that this vitality will be maintained, since your Alliance is rooted in a permanent trait of human psychology which the philosopher Alain described in these words: "It is a remarkable fact - and one to which I believe there are no exceptions - that the man who organises his own work is the man who works the hardest, as long as he co-operates".

(Original in French)

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Resolutions adopted by the 26th Congress of the ICA

Peace

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance, representing 325 million co-operators in 65 countries with varied economic, social and political systems;

Recalls that its Rules call upon member-organisations to work for the establishment of lasting peace and security;

Reaffirms the calls for peace adopted at previous Congresses as well as the resolutions adopted by the Central Committee in 1973 and 1975 in which the urgent need for a World Disarmament Conference and the dangers of the arms race were strongly stressed;

Welcomes the decisions of the Conference on Security and Collaboration in Europe, which created an atmosphere favourable to the promotion of economic, scientific, technical and trade collaboration between countries, independent of their socio-economic system;

Believes that the implementation of steps to relax international tensions is one of the most important conditions for the development and consolidation of friendly and business relations between national co-operative movements, irrespective of their social systems;

Declares that rivalry between countries for markets and investments and the growing power of multinationals to bring pressure on governments to enhance their own profit seeking interests constitute a potential source of conflict and threat to peace;

States that there continue to be regions of the world in which the seeds of tension exist, and that the threat to the peace and security of nations exists in a number of countries practising policies of racialism, apartheid and fascism;

Notes with great concern, the existence of great inequalities of wealth;

Emphasises that co-operative forms of enterprise which serve the interests of the community, and a wider application of co-operative principles, with their emphasis on service, have a vital role to play in the development of a more equitable social and economic order;

Requests

(a) its member-organisations to mobilise public opinion in support of government policies aimed at reducing tension, caused both by the arms race and economic exploitation by the few, and the conclusion of a worldwide agreement to refrain from the use of force in international relations;

(b) the ICA Central Committee to consider discussing what the UN has declared as the new international social and economic order, and to pursue this aim with the appropriate UN bodies;

(c) the United Nations to convene urgently a World Disarmament Conference so that the massive resources for armaments could be diverted into constructive programmes of economic and social development.

ICA's Long Term Programme of Work (1977-1980)

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Recalls the suggestion made at the 25th Congress for a long term programme of work to be drawn up;

Emphasises the primary importance of better planning, coordination, careful forecasting and control of the activities of ICA and its affiliated organisations;

Recognises the complexity in the formulation of the programme and the importance of the need to interpret it flexibly;

Notes that

(a) co-operatives must be helped to achieve increased efficiency in their economic operations through carefully devised programmes of education and management training, research, inter-co-operative collaboration and structural reforms;

(b) effective publicity, extending ICA membership projection of ICA's image as an efficient organisation, and close coordination with Auxiliary Committees are all very necessary;

(c) much has been achieved under the programme of the Co-operative Development Decade but that much more needs to be done in providing assistance to movements in developing countries directly and in collaboration with the United Nations and its specialised agencies;

(d) the vital pre-condition for the execution of all these tasks is the strengthening of the ICA Secretariat;

Adopts the programme as formulated in the document "ICA's Long Term Programme of Work 1977-1980" as amended by Congress;

Underlines that the implementation of this programme necessitates increased resources and calls upon the Central Committee to outline within one year the responsibilities of members in implementation of the programme;

Asks that regular reports be made to the Executive and Central Committees of the Alliance and a final report be presented to Congress in 1980.

Collaboration between Co-operatives

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Reaffirms its belief in the principle of Collaboration between Co-operatives proclaimed at its 23rd Congress in Vienna in 1966;

Recognises the progress made in collaboration between co-operatives, nationally and internationally, during the last ten years as indicated in the report of the ICA Working Party on Collaboration between Co-operatives;

Emphasises the importance of closer collaboration for the expansion and development of the international co-operative movement through seeking out increased trade and other opportunities, organising joint ventures in developing and other countries, promoting contacts through exchange visits, improved communications, greater exchanges of publications, publicising examples of successful collaboration, thus contributing to the cause of social progress and strengthening of worldwide peace;

Recommends that research should be undertaken by co-operative organisations and academic institutions into ways and means of expanding such collaboration;

Requests the Central Committee of the Alliance, in consultation with the ICA Auxiliary Committees, further to explore ways and means of expanding collaboration between co-operatives through conferences and seminars and to consider whether new arrangements should be made to ensure that collaboration is kept closely under review in the ICA;

Calls upon member-organisations to do all they can to collaborate with other co-operative organisations to compete more effectively with monopolies and multinational corporations;

Asks the Central Committee to report to the 27th Congress of the ICA in 1980 on progress made in the promotion of increased collaboration between co-operatives.

The Tasks of the Co-operative Press

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Welcomes the resolution of the Conference on Security and Co-operation held in Europe with, interalia, the aim of facilitating the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds, of encouraging co-operation in the field of information and improving the working conditions of journalists;

States that the co-operative press carries out its activity on all levels - local, national and international; that organs of the co-operative press publish a vast range of information on co-operative matters and that there is a mutual exchange of co-operative periodicals and literature;

Considers that the co-operative press can play an important role in the development and consolidation of the international co-operative movement, in the improvement of ICA activity and in the promotion of social and economic progress;

Deems it necessary to make full use of the publications of the ICA and of the national co-operative organisations which are members of the ICA, in order to propagate the aims and methods of the co-operative movement, to define the place which the movement occupies in present-day social and economic life, and its role in the work for economic and social justice;

Commends the constructive work of the ICA Working Party on Co-operative Press;

Appeals to the ICA member-organisations to promote the publication of material which will acquaint co-operative members and the population of their countries with the international co-operative movement, and with the activities of the International Co-operative Alliance.

Standards for Non-Food Products

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Recalls the declaration of consumer rights adopted at the 24th Congress of the ICA in 1969, in which it was declared that consumers have a right to:

(i) a reasonable standard of nutrition, clothing and housing,
(ii) adequate standards of safety and a healthy environment free from pollution,
(iii) access to unadulterated merchandise at fair prices and with reasonable variety and choice,
(iv) access to relevant information on goods and services and to education on consumer topics,
(v) influence in economic life and democratic participation in its control;

Regrets that more progress has not been made in implementing this declaration;

Views with alarm the increasing use of toxic substances in non-food products such as detergents, drugs, shampoos, etc., the increasing pollution of the environment by the discharge of poisonous substances all of which are harmful to mankind;

Insists that such use should be strictly controlled;

Commends the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) which, in the field of food products have established a Food Safety Standards Commission, in order to develop adequate safe-guards which will protect consumers;

Requests the World Health Organisation, International Standards Commission, and International Electrical Commission to set up a similar commission for non-food products in order to establish uniform safety standards;

Urges ICA member-organisations to pioneer consumer safety in their own production and trade, and in collaboration with appropriate consumer groups, to influence their national governments to support the introduction and strict application of safety standards regarding toxic substances in non-food products, and generally to support measures on consumer protection;

Requests the Organisation for Co-operative Consumer Policy and member-organisations to pursue more vigorously the implementation of the ICA's declaration of consumer rights;

Asks member-organisations to ensure greater exchange of information concerning the results of tests in this field in co-operative laboratories.

Technical Assistance and Co-operative Housing

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Notes that a recent world housing survey shows that housing conditions particularly in the developing countries, are deteriorating alarmingly and that problems of over crowding and intolerable sanitary conditions are acute and that related services are unsatisfactorily provided, if they at all exist;

States that the new production of houses, quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as modernisation of the old stock of housing are not given proper priority in the national economies in which the building industry, being labour intensive, plays a vital role;

Welcomes the convening by the UN of a World Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver, Canada, and

Accepts the principles and recommendations of the conference requesting governments to give increased attention to the problem of Human Settlements, particularly in the developing countries;

Reaffirms that the provision of housing for the great majority of people has not been met satisfactorily;

Declares that co-operative methods have proved to be most beneficial for the solution of the housing problem in the developed countries, involving the betterment of the quality of housing and the application of democracy in the provision of housing, and

Emphasises that co-operative methods should be extensively applied in the housing programmes of both developed and developing countries;

Asks governments to make available funds for housing co-operative programmes and that in bi-lateral assistance programmes countries with experience in co-operative housing make this available and devote a bigger share of their assistance funds for development of co-operative housing;

Requests the UN to give a high priority to the solution of the housing problem throughout the world particularly in the light of the recommendations of the conference on Human Settlements and to that end;

Further requests the UN to set up a special division to handle co-operative housing development in its Human Settlements programme.

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Tourism and the Co-operative Movement

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Aware of the growing tourist needs of the population and concerned that this need will constantly increase during the next decades;

Concerned about the results that could follow in certain countries if this vital sector of the economy is left to private capitalist type organisations;

Delighted that co-operative achievements in many countries confirm the ability of the co-operative movement to engage in such activities;

Convinced of the essential role that the co-operative movement plays in taking the interest of the consumer into consideration and of the solutions it offers to the problems now facing the development of social tourism at the international level;

Underlines the great benefits which could result from a closer collaboration between co-operatives in this field;

Appeals to all co-operative movements to contribute to the development of popular tourism by working as closely as possible with all organisations (trade unions, mutual societies, etc.) wishing to develop a high standard of tourism available to all;

Recommends that all the movements at present active in tourism better coordinate their activities within the ICA by setting up as a first stage, a working party, which could study methods of collaboration, first inter-co-operative and then with the International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) and the International Federation of Popular Travel Organisations (IFPTO).

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Conference on European Security and Co-operation held in Helsinki

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Welcomes the agreements reached by governments at the Conference on European Security and Co-operation held in Helsinki in 1975;

Calls on member-organisations of the International Co-operative Alliance and all interested public bodies to take all steps to publicise these important agreements and to work for their implementation.

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Women and the Co-operative Movement

The 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance,

Notes that the International Women's Year proclaimed by the United Nations for 1975 has created a growing awareness all over the world of the fact that the difficulties facing mankind - hunger, injustices, threats to environment and peace - cannot be overcome without the participation and contribution by women;

Emphasises that in a number of countries, discrimination against women still remains one of the most acute problems, preventing women's active participation in all spheres of life in society, and in the co-operative movement;

Stresses the importance of fact-finding research into the situation of women as basis for action;

Emphasises the need for co-operative organisations to participate in the struggle for full equality for women in the political, economic and social life of all countries;

Urges co-operative movements to increase activities aimed at attracting women into both the economic and social activities of the co-operative movement, including the development of co-operative education, family planning, cultural activities, etc.;

Draws attention to the necessity of revising legislation and bye-laws in countries where these hamper women from full membership and participation in the management of societies;

Considers it necessary for national co-operative movements to expand their activities by the exchange of delegations of women co-operators, and by holding national, regional and international seminars, conferences and symposia;

Recognises the important role of the ICA's Women's Committee in promoting actions of women and for women, including working relations with other ICA bodies and international organisations and therefore

Recommends strengthened support for the committee in its work for equality, development and peace.

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Extracts from ICA Rules

As amended by the Twenty-sixth International Co-operative Congress at Paris, 1976

SECTION I. CONSTITUTION

Article 1. Name

The name of this Organisation, which was founded in London, August 1895, is the International Co-operative Alliance, ICA (Alliance coopérative internationale, ACI; International Genossenschaftsbund, IGB; Mezdunarodny Cooperativny Alliance, MCA).

...

Article 2. Constituent Members

The ICA is an International Association formed of National Unions of Co-operative Societies; National Federations of Co-operative Unions; Regional Federations or Unions of Co-operative Societies; Co-operative Societies; Associations of persons or Organisations which have as their aim the promotion of co-operation.

Article 3. Objects

The International Co-operative Alliance, uniting co-operative organisations of various social and political orientation and of differing socio-economic systems, in continuance of the work of the Rochdale Pioneers, and in accordance with Co-operative Principles, seeks, in complete independence and by its own methods, and in collaboration with organisations which pursue aims of importance to co-operation, to substitute for the profit-making regime a co-operative system organised in the interest of the whole community and based upon mutual self-help.

The ICA shall have the following objects:

a. To be the universal representative of Co-operative Organisations of all types which, in practice, observe the Co-operative Principles.

b. To propagate Co-operative Principles and methods throughout the world.

c. To promote Co-operation in all countries.

d. To safeguard the interests of the Co-operative Movement in all its forms.

e. To maintain good relations between its affiliated Organisations.

f. To promote friendly and economic relations between the Co-operative Organisations of all types, nationally and internationally.

g. To work for the establishment of lasting peace and security.

h. To assist the promotion of the economic and social progress of the workers of all countries.

Article 4. Methods

The ICA shall seek to attain its objects:

a. By convening periodical International Congresses.

b. By sending delegations to visit the Movements in all countries, with the special object of studying the Movements, of exchanging experiences, and of giving to the Movements such advice and guidance as they may desire, or which the ICA may consider desirable.

c. By issuing publications.

d. By promoting the teaching and study of Co-operation in all countries.

e. By developing the activity of the Henry J. May Foundation, Permanent Centre of International Co-operative Study.

f. By carrying out research studies and inquiries on problems of vital importance to the Movement; and by collecting co-operative statistics.

g. By creating International Co-operative Auxiliary Organisations for Trading; Production - Agricultural, Industrial and Artisanal; Banking and Credit; Assurance; Housing; as well as for other sectors of economic activity; and by maintaining a close liaison with all such Auxiliary Committees.

h. By collaboration to the fullest extent with all United Nations Organisations, and with other Voluntary and non-Governmental International Organisations which pursue aims of importance to Co-operation.

i. By any other suitable and legal methods.

Article 5. Official Languages

English, French, German, Russian and Spanish shall be the official languages of the ICA. It shall be for the Central Committee or Executive to decide to what extent each language shall be used.

...

Article 7. Independence

The ICA regards Co-operation as neutral ground on which people holding the most varied opinions and professing the most diverse creeds may meet and act in common.

The ICA shall not associate itself with any political or religious organisation.

Such independence, on which the unity of the International Co-operative Movement depends, shall be maintained in all the meetings and in all the publications of the ICA.

SECTION II. MEMBERSHIP

Article 8. Eligibility

Associations of persons or Co-operative Organisations which observe the Aims of the ICA and the Policy laid down by its Congress shall be eligible for membership of the ICA.

Any Association of persons, or of Societies, irrespective of its legal constitution, shall be recognised as a Co-operative Society provided that it has for its object the economic and social betterment of its members by means of the exploitation of an enterprise based upon mutual aid, and that it conforms to the Co-operative Principles as established by the Rochdale Pioneers and as reformulated by the 23rd Congress of the ICA (The text of these principles follows).

...

Subject to compliance with these conditions, the types of Association eligible for membership shall include the following:

a. National Unions or Federations of Co-operative Societies of the types mentioned in f., g., h., i., j.

b. National Federations of Co-operative Unions.

c. Regional Unions of Co-operative Societies.

d. Consumers' or Agricultural Co-operative Wholesale Societies.

e. Co-operative Banks and Co-operative Insurance Societies.

f. Consumers' Co-operative Societies.

g. Co-operative Societies of Industrial Producers or Artisanal Co-operatives.

h. Agricultural or Fishery Co-operative Societies.

i. Co-operative Credit Societies.

j. Housing and Building Societies.

k. Supra-National or International Co-operative Organisations.

l. Other Associations of persons or Associations which have as their aim the Promotion of Co-operation.

Article 9. Applications for Membership

Organisations desirous of becoming members of the ICA shall apply to the Executive on the proper form to be supplied by the Director, and shall send with their applications two copies of their Rules, their last Annual Report and Balance Sheet. If the language in which the Rules are printed is not one of the official languages of the ICA, a translation thereof in English, French, German, or Russian shall be supplied.

Organisations of the types mentioned in sub-sections c., d., e., f., g., h., i., and j. of Article 8 shall apply through their appropriate National Union of their respective country, if such Union is already in membership with the ICA.

Before any application is submitted to the Executive the Director shall make appropriate inquiries as to the suitability of the Organisation concerned to be admitted to membership of the ICA.

Article 10. Right of Appeal

In the event of the Executive rejecting an application, the Organisation in question shall have the right of appeal to the Central Committee.

Article 11. Cessation of Membership

Membership of the ICA shall cease:

a. By voluntary resignation: notice of which shall be given by the Organisation concerned at least three months before the end of the financial year of the ICA.

b. By non-payment of subscriptions: any Organisation which in two successive years has not paid its subscription, or made a specific request to the Executive for leniency, shall be removed the list of members.

c. By resolution of the Central Committee: any Organisation which acts contrary to the interests or Rules of the ICA, or whose activity is inconsistent with the Objects of the ICA, shall be excluded from membership.

Article 12. Rights of Members

Subject to the satisfactory and up-to-date fulfilment of their financial obligations to the ICA, members shall have the right:

a. To take part in the Congress in accordance with Articles 19, 22, 23, and 24 of these Rules.

b. To nominate representatives to the Central Committee in accordance with Article 27.

c. To nominate substitutes for their representatives on the Central Committee who shall have died or retired before the expiry of their term of office, or whose mandate shall have been withdrawn with the consent of the Central Committee, or who shall be prevented from attending a meeting of the Committee.

d. To receive from the Secretariat of the ICA all appropriate services, advice, and to receive information about current activities of the Alliance, reports of meetings of its leading authorities, and all printed editions published by the ICA, etc.

e. To submit proposals for consideration by the Executive, the Central Committee, or the Congress.

f. To collaborate in any of the Auxiliaries of the ICA in accordance with their constitution and rules.

g. To apply to the ICA with requests for technical assistance and help in the development of co-operation.

Article 13. Obligations of Members

Every Organisation affiliated to the ICA shall have the following obligations:

a. To observe the aims and policy of the ICA and to conform in its activity to the Co-operative Principles as defined in Article 8.

b. To pay, during the first three months of each financial year, an annual subscription according to the provisions of Articles 16 and 17, and to declare the basis upon which it is calculated.

c. To supply the ICA with its Annual Report.

d. To send for the Library of the ICA a gratis copy of all literary works published by it; to inform the ICA of books published in its respective country which are of special interest or importance either for the work or Library of the ICA (if possible to supply the ICA with such books).

e. To appoint a Correspondent who shall be responsible for sending to the ICA regularly - for the purpose of its publications, for the information of its Authorities, or for its documentation - full information concerning national co-operative developments, as well as all legislative or other actions and decisions on the part of the Public Authorities which directly or indirectly affect the activity and life of the Co-operative Movement.

f. To supply, as far as possible, all information that shall be requested by the Authorities of the ICA.

g. To take all such action as shall be recommended by the Authorities of the ICA in support of its policy, and for the implementation of the decisions of its Congress and Committees.

h. To give such support to the publications of the ICA that their sale shall become a source of revenue to the ICA.

SECTION III. FINANCE

...

Article 17. Rate of Subscription

1. The subscription to be paid by each Affiliated Organisation shall be calculated in accordance with the scales applicable to the different categories of membership laid down by the Central Committee; the basis and rates of such scales shall be changed as circumstances shall necessitate, in order to assure an adequate income to the ICA.

...

SECTION IV. GOVERNMENT

Article 18. Authorities

The Authorities of the ICA are - The Congress; the Central Committee; the Executive, the Director.

Article 19. Congress Convocation

The Congress shall be convened, as a rule, at intervals of three to four years. An extraordinary session can be convened at the request of a majority of two-thirds representative votes. The year and meeting place of the Congress shall be decided, when possible, by the previous Congress; failing that, by the Central Committee.

...

Article 20. Powers of the Congress

The Congress is the highest authority of the ICA. Its basic function is the discussion of subjects connected with the future policy of the ICA. The Congress has the following powers:

a. To approve the Report of the Central Committee on the Work of the ICA since the previous Congress.

b. To elect the Central Committee from the nominations received in accordance with Article 27.

c. To decide upon all motions and resolutions presented by the Central Committee, or by affiliated Organisations under Article 24.

d. To establish the Policy and Programme of the ICA.

e. To amend the Rules by a majority of two-thirds of the votes represented.

f. To decide the Year and Place of the next Congress.

g. To determine the Seat of the ICA.

h. To decide upon the Dissolution of the ICA by a majority of two-thirds of the votes represented.

Article 21. Constitution of the Congress

The Congress shall consist of the delegates of the Organisations affiliated to the ICA.

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Article 23. Voting at Congress

Organisations shall be entitled to one vote for each delegate appointed under Article 22. Organisations shall have the right to entrust all their votes to one or more delegates, provided that no delegates shall hold more than ten votes.

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SECTION V. ADMINISTRATION

Article 27. Central Committee

The Central Committee shall consist of representatives nominated by affiliated Organisations and elected by the Congress.

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The Women's Auxiliary Committee, having superseded the Women Co-operators' Advisory Council, shall be entitled to one representative and one vote.

Article 28. Duties of the Central Committee

The Central Committee shall have the following duties;

a. To interpret the Policy and to carry out the Programme of the ICA established by the Congress.

b. To elect the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the ICA, also the Executive.

c. To appoint the Director of the ICA and to fix his remuneration.

d. To appoint the Auditor.

e. To confirm the budget of the ICA drawn up by the Executive.

f. To decide the Agenda and the date of the Congress, as well as the order of Congress business, and to report on all matters submitted to Congress.

g. To discuss reports and problems of interest to the international co-operative movement, and to adopt resolutions, declarations and appeals on them.

h. To confirm agreements which impose permanent obligations upon the ICA.

i. To deal with appeals and with the exclusion of members.

j. To appoint the Trustees and if thought expedient to do so to remove the Trustees or any of them from time to time and to appoint new Trustees in the places of any Trustees who shall die, resign, or be removed as aforesaid.

k. To make or authorise on behalf of the ICA all purchases, leases, sales, exchanges, mortgages, and other matters referred to in Article 37 b. hereof.

l. To decide on matters not provided for in the Rules.

Article 29. Meetings of the Central Committee

The Central Committee shall meet at least once a year, also:

a. On the proposal of one-fifth of its members and if the majority voting agree to the proposal.

b. On the recommendation of the Executive.

C. Compulsorily at the request of one-third of its members.

The Central Committee shall hold a meeting immediately before and during or immediately after each Congress.

It shall have the right to take decisions by means of correspondence.

All questions on which the Central Committee votes shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast.

Article 30. Elections of Officers

The Central Committee at its meeting during or immediately after each Congress shall elect a President (who shall be President of the ICA and who shall preside over the Congress and over the meetings of the Central Committee and Executive) and two Vice-Presidents.

Article 31. Executive

The Executive shall consist of the President, two Vice-Presidents, and thirteen other members elected by the Central Committee from amongst its members during or immediately after each Congress, by secret ballot.

The Organisations of one country, or union of countries, shall not have more than two representatives on the Executive, excluding the President of the ICA.

Any member of the Executive who is prevented from attending a meeting shall have the right to appoint a substitute, who shall be a member of the Central Committee. Such appointments shall be notified of the Director.

Article 32. Duties of the Executive

The Executive shall have the following duties:

a. To admit new members into the ICA.

b. To examine requests from Member Organisations for special consideration regarding the fulfilment of their obligations under Article 17 of the Rules, and if, in the opinion of the Executive, a reduction in the financial obligation of any Organisation is

justified, it shall fix the subscription it considers appropriate, also the representation rights of the Organisation concerned under Articles 22 and 27. In exercising this right, the Executive shall take particular account of the stage of development of the country and the organisation concerned.

c. To be responsible for the appointment or removal, and the remuneration of the staff required by the Alliance.

d. To draw up the budget for confirmation by the Central Committee and to control expenditure and receipts.

e. To prepare the Agenda for the meetings of the Central Committee.

f. To prepare and organise the Congress.

g. To direct the collaboration of the ICA with United Nations Organisations, and with other voluntary and non-Governmental Organisations with which the ICA shall have established relations.

h. To control the affairs of the ICA between the meetings of the Central Committee.

i. To deal with all questions referred to it by the Central Committee.

Article 33. Meetings of the Executive

The Executive shall meet as often as circumstances demand, and shall as far as possible decide on each occasion the date of the next meeting.

Meetings shall also be convened at the request of one-third of the members, by decision of the President, or of the Director.

The Executive shall have the right to take decisions by means of correspondence.

Article 34. The Director

The Director shall be responsible for the necessary action to give effect to the decisions of the Congress, the Central Committee and the Executive, and for the control of the affairs of the ICA in the intervals between meetings of the Executive.

In particular he shall have the following duties and obligations:

a. To control the use of the finances according to the provisions of the budget, the work of the personnel, the establishments and the activities of the Alliance.

b. To take part in the meetings of the Authorities with power to give advice but without a vote.

c. To arrange and prepare documentation for the Congress and meetings of the Committees of the ICA.

Also to participate in such ways as the policy of the ICA may require in the work of the Auxiliary Committees and Working Parties.

d. To represent the ICA whenever the Executive may so decide at meetings of the United Nations Organisations and of Voluntary and non-Governmental Organisations with which the ICA shall have established relations.

e. To maintain relations between the ICA and its members, to undertake such visits to National Movements, affiliated and non-affiliated, as the Executive may determine.

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News

Great Britain

A unique Co-operative Organisation
A Co-operative Party - Why and How? (1)

1. Historical Background

Individual Co-operative Societies were started in Britain well over 200 years ago but they were isolated examples and did not join forces to form what we now call "the Co-operative Movement". The modern Co-operative Movement began in 1844, when a group of cotton weavers and other workers in Rochdale, Lancashire, banded together to trade under the name of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society. Their first shop in Toad Lane, Rochdale, is now preserved as a Co-operative museum: it has been reconstructed and will be open to visitors in 1977; no doubt some of the readers of "Co-operative Information" will then have the opportunity to visit it while touring Britain.

The Rochdale Pioneers introduced into retailing new ideas which today we take for granted. They based their operation on eight principles - now universally known as the Rochdale Principles. One of the eight principles was that of religious and political neutrality, and the Society was open to persons of all religious opinions and political convictions. It must be remembered that in 1844 less than 4 per cent of the British population over the age of 21 years old had the right to vote - and they were all men; there was no vote for women. There were no organised political parties and there was certainly no political party representing working men and women. It was in this climate that the Pioneers started their Society, and it was no wonder that they insisted on political neutrality.

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(1) By L.B. Goodrum, Assistant-Secretary of the Co-operative Party (Co-operative Union Ltd.), London.

The success of the Rochdale Co-operative Society encouraged groups of workers in towns all over Britain to set up their own retail Co-operative Societies. The history of each individual Co-operative Society is part of the social history of Britain. It has shown that working people can manage their own business successfully.

By the end of the 19th century co-operation had become big business and, as such, was a threat to private traders. During this time opponents of co-operation used the Press to try and undermine the progress of co-operative societies. They also began to use the political machinery represented by Parliament and Local Government. As a result, in 1881, the Co-operative Union established a Joint Parliamentary Committee whose prime task was to be a "watch dog" on Parliamentary activities.

As the Co-operative Movement grew larger so the attacks from its competitors increased. The Joint Parliamentary Committee found that it was handicapped because it had no-one on the floor of the House of Commons to whom it could go directly; it had to lobby sympathetic Liberal, and, later, Labour Members of Parliament. Between 1897 and the First World War a number of resolutions were put before the Annual Congress of the Co-operative Union urging the need for direct Parliamentary representation. Some were passed but proved abortive largely because Societies would not commit themselves to financial support for a political Party.

In the early stages of the First World War the Co-operative Movement increased in membership, capital and trade largely because of the stand it took against profiteering. The years 1916 and 1917 were years of restricted supplies of food and fuel. The Co-operative Movement offered its machinery to the Government for dealing with the situation but the offer was ignored.

In 1917, the Joint Parliamentary Committee and 104 retail co-operative societies tabled a motion before the Swansea Congress which called upon the Co-operative Movement to secure direct representation in Parliament and in Local Government. It was carried by 1,979 votes to 201.

2. The Emergence of a Co-operative Political Party

An Emergency Political Conference was called at the Central Hall, Westminster in London on the 18th October, 1917 (1). Over 900 delegates attended representing more than 500 retail co-operative societies. In his Address to the Conference, the Chairman, Mr. W.T. Allen, who was also Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee

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(1) To celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Party, the Central Hall, Westminster, has been booked for a National Rally to be held on October 22nd, 1977; prominent National speakers will attend and entertainment will be provided by the famous brass band of the Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd.

of the Co-operative Union and Director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, said: "We have come to London at great expense of time and money, not that we have either to waste at any period, but because we are being played a cruel game which it is our duty to publicly expose both in the interests of the Movement and of clean Government and also because we believe a National Emergency Conference to be the only way of meeting the situation in which we find outselves. We have pitched out tent as near as possible between Downing Street and the Houses of Parliament because the burden of our complaint is directed against those two centres of privilege and our hope is that by the time our two days' task is done, both centres will not only have heard the echo of our grievances but will be aware of our plans for their adjustment. Since the political machine has been successfully invoked to our injury, we reply by organising, for the first time, a political conference". A draft scheme for Co-operative Parliamentary representation was approved at this Conference and the Central Co-operative Parliamentary Representation Committee was set up to later become the Co-operative Party.

Following the Emergency Conference, the Co-operative Union began to establish the machinery for the Co-operative Party. Mr. W.H. Watkins (the father of Mr. W.P. Watkins, Director of the International Co-operative Alliance for many years) was the first Chairman and Mr. Sam Perry became the first secretary. A small staff was recruited and an office was opened at 19, Buckingham Street, in London, just off the Strand (1). A National Committee was established consisting of 26 persons representing Sectional Boards of the Co-operative Union, affiliated retail Societies, the Central Education Committee of the Co-operative Union, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, the Joint Parliamentary Committee, the English Women's Guild, the Scottish Women's Guild, the National Men's Guild and the Co-operative Productive Federation. As can be seen, it was a very wide embracing National Committee and covered every section of the Co-operative Movement affiliated to the Co-operative Union.

3. National and Local Organisation of the Co-operative Party

The Co-operative Party is a department of the British Co-operative Union. This Union was formed in 1869 in order to bring together the scattered co-operative societies of that time, to organise new societies and to spread the knowledge of co-operative principles and practice. Its Headquarters are in Manchester and it is now composed of the following:

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(1) The present Head Office of the Co-operative Party is in 158, Buckingham Palace Road.

- a secretarial and Legal Department, incorporating a Superannuation Section responsible for advising co-operative societies on all aspects of employees' pension schemes and on Government policy in relation to superannuation;
- an Economic and Research Department;
- a Labour Department;
- a Taxation Department;
- an Information Department and Library;
- a Finance Department.

Furthermore, three of its departments are based outside Manchester; they are: the Education Department and Co-operative College, at Loughborough, in the heart of the Midlands; the Parliamentary Office, in London, which services the Parliamentary Committee and maintains essential liaison between the Co-operative Movement and Government services; and the Head Office of the Co-operative Party, in London.

For administrative purposes, the British Co-operative Union is divided into nine areas called 'Sections', seven for England and Wales, one for Scotland and one for Northern Ireland.

The Co-operative Party is subject to the overriding authority of the Central Executive Committee of the British Co-operative Union and ultimately to that of the Annual Co-operative Congress to which it submits an Annual Report. The Party, however, enjoys considerable freedom, not only in these spheres but particularly for purposes of propaganda and the organisation of its electoral machinery.

The basic unit of organisation of the Co-operative Party is the 'Society Party' which is a special organisation set up by the members of a retail society and is responsible for carrying out political work within the area covered by the society. The geographical size of Society Party depends, of course, on the area covered by the respective retail society. The London Political Committee, which is the political section of the London Co-operative Society, covers either partially or wholly 72 Parliamentary Constituencies. The Birmingham Co-operative Party covers 34 constituencies and the North Eastern Society Co-operative Party covers 33 constituencies.

There are no Co-operative Party branches in Northern Ireland, but the Society and Voluntary Co-operative Parties in Great Britain cover either wholly or partially some 590 of the 623 Parliamentary seats. In the remaining 33 constituencies there is either no Co-operative Party organisation or there may not even be a Society functioning.

Within a Society Party there may be several Constituency Co-operative Parties. A Constituency Co-operative Party may consist entirely of individual members but provision should be made for

representatives from affiliated organisations such as the Co-operative Women's Guild or the Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild. It will be noted that guildswomen have played a large part in the growth of the Co-operative Party and that, to a very large extent, they have acted as the Women's Section of the Party as well as being individual members of their respective local Parties.

The Society Party is responsible for the financing of Constituency Parties and for the rules and regulations under which they operate. The Constituency Party is the medium through which the Society Party affiliates to the Constituency Labour Party.

Where the local Co-operative Society is unaffiliated to the Party a voluntary Party may be formed to engage in similar functions as carried on by Society Parties.

Local Co-operative Party branches are affiliated to just over 400 Constituency Labour Parties and it is the constant endeavour of the National Executive Committee that this number should be increased. The present National Executive Committee consists of 16 members, meets six times a year and its Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected at its Annual Meeting in July of each year.

The Co-operative Party Conference is held annually at Easter. Local Societies and Parties send delegates and submit resolutions for discussion at the Conference. The first National Conference organised by the Party, apart from the one which took place at Central Hall, Westminster, was held in 1920 at Preston. No National Conferences were held between 1921 and 1924; the current series of Conferences commenced in 1925 and have been held regularly ever since.

Resolutions for discussion at the Annual Conference are submitted by Co-operative Party branches and affiliated co-operative societies. Not more than three resolutions can be submitted by any one co-operative organisation. The resolutions cover the whole spectrum of economic, social and political matters but tend to concentrate on those aspects of policy which are of particular interest to the consumer. It is worth recording here that ever since its inception the Co-operative Party has been a strong supporter of the former League of Nations and, since 1945, of the United Nations. In 1957 the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Party approved a policy statement entitled "The United Nations Organisation - Pathway to Peace". This document showed how Co-operative principles could be used to create a stronger international organisation and thus a healthier and more peaceful world.

The staff of the Party's Head Office is composed of a General Secretary, an Assistant-Secretary, and four full-time and two part-time clerical and general staff. Four secretaries are employed in the House of Commons to serve Members of the Co-operative Parliamentary Group. There are five National Organisers who cover the Co-operative Union Sections in Great Britain.

4. Finances

The Co-operative Party has affiliated membership (co-operative organisations) and individual membership.

Co-operative societies are under no constitutional obligation to subscribe to the funds of the Co-operative Party. The great majority do so, however. Co-operative societies affiliated to the Co-operative Party make up for nearly 95 per cent of the membership of the Co-operative Movement as a whole. At some stage in the past all these societies which are presently affiliated to the Party have needed to obtain their members' permission to do so. In some cases this has been done by amending the rules of the Society by submitting each year a resolution for the renewal of the national affiliation. An amendment of rule usually involves the automatic payment of the subscription, this payment being reported to members' meetings as an item to be included in the proposed allocations in the revenue account.

The rate of contributions to be paid annually by retail societies to the British Co-operative Union is determined by the Central Executive Committee of the Union subject to approval by the Annual Co-operative Congress. The present rate of there contributions is of 430 per million pounds of sales, with a minimum rate of £ 25 per year.

A retail society affiliated to the Co-operative Party as well as to the Co-operative Union pays an additional contribution of £ 71.67 per million pounds of sales to the National Co-operative Party Funds, which amounts to one sixth of its contribution to the Co-operative Union. This proportion applies to all affiliated retail societies: for instance, the Birmingham Co-operative Society, in the Midlands had, in 1975, a turnover of £ 75.5 million: this means that, in 1976, its contribution to the Co-operative Party Funds will be 75.5 times the amount of £ 71.67, in other words, a total sum of £ 5,411,086. Until the end of 1975, the figure on which the society's contribution was based was £ 53.82 per million pounds of sales; the increase to £ 71.67 arose from a decision taken at the 1976 Annual Co-operative Congress.

Local Co-operative Parties have to purchase individual membership cards from Party head office and in 1975 this brought in an income of nearly £ 1,000.

5. Relations with the Labour Party

All individual members of the Co-operative Party must sign a declaration stating that they do not belong to any political organisation which sponsors or supports Parliamentary or local Government candidates in opposition to candidates either of the Co-operative Party or of any other Party with which it has an electoral agreement

This means in practice that only members of the Labour Party can also be members of the Co-operative Party; it is possible, however, to be a member of the Co-operative Party and not belong to any political Party.

Between 1917 and 1927 there was no written agreement between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Party; during this period, there were examples of Co-operative candidates opposing Labour Party candidates, particularly at local Government elections. In 1927 both Parties signed an Agreement which, among other conditions, provided for the affiliation of local Co-operative Parties to Constituency Labour Parties.

The purpose of this Agreement was to prevent any competition between the two Parties for Parliamentary or local Government seats. It was not until 1946, however, that a further Agreement regularised the manner in which Co-operative candidates should be selected through the Labour Party machinery. At that time there was no limit to the number of Parliamentary or local Government seats for which the Co-operative Party could run.

In 1958, after some months of negotiation, a new Agreement was drawn up between the Labour Party and the Co-operative Union, fixing at 30 the maximum number of candidates which the Co-operative Party could sponsor for Parliamentary elections; but in fact, since this Agreement was drawn up, this figure has never been reached, as will be seen in the following section.

It has sometimes been suggested that the Co-operative Movement should seek its representation in Parliament and local Government directly through the Labour Party in much the same way as a Trade Union does. It is necessary to point out, however, that the Co-operative Movement is not just one organisation, like the Transport and General Workers Union, or any other National Union, but a many-sided Movement. Its Congress is not in the same category as an Annual Conference of a Trade Union but is a "getting together" of a number of organisations which have varied functions and enjoy autonomy. In the same way that the TUC is not affiliated to the Labour Party so the Co-operative Union and, consequently, the Co-operative Party is not nationally affiliated to the Labour Party. This does not exclude the closest and friendliest relations with the Labour Party.

6. General Elections and the Co-operative Parliamentary Group

The first Parliamentary by-election fought by the Co-operative Party was the Prestwich (Manchester) by-election in January, 1918, in which Mr. H.J. May, later Secretary of the International Co-operative Alliance, polled 2,832 votes but was unsuccessful. The first Co-operative Parliamentary candidate to be returned to the House of Commons was the late Mr. Alf Waterson who was elected for

the Kettering Constituency in the 1918 General Election. In the 16 General Elections which have been held since 1918, the Co-operative Party has put forward 382 candidates and 210 have been returned as Members of Parliament.

The Co-operative Parliamentary Group now consists of 15 Members of Parliament and nine Peers in the House of Lords (1).

The full Group meets monthly to consider representations from either the Movement or individual Societies, and to consider long term legislation before it is discussed in the Houses of Parliament. The Secretary of the Co-operative Party acts as Secretary to the Co-operative Group. A Steering Committee of the Group consisting of five or six members meets once a week to discuss Parliamentary business and decides, in conjunction with officials from the Co-operative Party and the Parliamentary Committee whether action needs to be taken on any items coming up for discussion during the following week.

7. Co-operative Party Policy

In its formative years the main purpose of the Co-operative Party was a defensive one and it concerned itself almost exclusively with the trading and commercial problems of the Co-operative Movement. The Party was not born with a sense of idealism and a coherent political philosophy, but rather out of the frustration and outright hostility it experienced from political and trading opponents. From 1942 to 1962 the Party had as its Secretary one of the Movement's most profound thinkers and philosophers in the late Sir Jack Bailey. In his writings and speeches he demonstrated quite clearly that Co-operation is not just a business, but that it is an exercise in political, economic and social democracy.

The Party developed a conscious and explicit role as the political expression of the organised consumer. In recent years the Party has paid particular attention to the ways in which co-operative principles and organisation can be used to extend the field of social ownership and be applied also to existing nationalised industry. It has taken a great interest in the expansion and development of co-operative movements overseas.

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(1) The United Kingdom legislative authority consists of three elements - the Queen, the House of Lords and the elected House of Commons. There are nine members of the House of Lords who were either formerly Labour and Co-operative Members of Parliament or had given long standing service to the trading side of the Co-operative Movement. They are designated as Co-operative Peers and, along with the fifteen Labour and Co-operative Members of Parliament, constitute the Co-operative Parliamentary Group. Two of the peers serve as Ministers in the Government.

Since the end of the Second World War, the Party has published a total of 36 policy statements on national and international affairs. These statements have covered almost every aspect of domestic policy and several of them have introduced new ideas which today have become practical reality.

In 1952 in "The People's Industry", the Party advocated the need for diversity in the methods of public ownership. It suggested that the State should afford loans to groups of workers willing to buy out the small firms employing them and to reorganise them as workers' co-operatives. Some 22 years later, this has become a reality. In spite of the difficulties and setbacks which the new workers' co-operatives have faced, the Co-operative Party fully supports the establishment of more viable workers' co-operatives. In 1976, the Party published a policy statement dealing with this sector.

In 1955, long before the consumer was served by voluntary or state organisations, the Party published proposals for the setting up of a Ministry of Consumers' Welfare; the proposals stated that the Minister should be a leading member of the Cabinet and that local offices should be set up - under the control of local authorities - to which consumers could go with complaints. A start was made in this direction when, in 1964, the Labour and Co-operative Party member of Parliament for Hillsborough was appointed Minister of State at the Board of Trade with particular responsibility for consumer protection. Following the return of a Labour Government in February 1974, a Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection with Cabinet rank was appointed.

In 1957 the Party discussed at its Annual Conference the need for co-operative housing societies and, two years later, issued a policy statement on "Housing - A Co-operative Approach". It recommended the establishment of a Co-operative Housing Development Organisation whose main function would be to promote co-operative housing associations and in 1964 the Housing Corporation was set up for this purpose.

The few examples reported above clearly show that the Co-operative Party machinery has proved in practice the most suitable means for political expression of the various facets of the Co-operative Movement.

Current Co-operative Party Publications

All available from the Co-operative Party, 158 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9UB.

1. Comprehensive Literature Service.

2. The Party's journal "Platform" published 6 times a year.

3. Co-operative Party Notes.

Issues still available:

No. 94 - September, 1976 - Financial Aid to Political Parties - The Houghton Committee Report.

No. 93 - June, 1976 - A Policy for Transport.

Nos. 91/92 - March, 1976 - Co-operators in Parliament - Debate on the Industrial Common Ownership Bill.

No. 90 - March, 1976 - Housing Co-operatives - Harold Campbell's Report.

Nos. 88/89 - December, 1975 - Devolution, the Government's Proposals.

No. 87 - December, 1975 - The British Press.

No. 86 - September, 1975 - Workers' Co-operatives (Part 2).

No. 85 - August, 1975 - Workers' Co-operatives (Part 1).

4. 1976 Conference Publications.

(a) Report of National Executive Committee.
(b) Chairman's Address.
(c) Report of the Conference.
(d) Policy Statement on Workers' Co-operatives.

5. Co-operative Party Constitution.

6. Political Voice leaflet.

7. Revolution Down Your Way leaflet.

8. Consumers in Politics - The History of the Co-operative Party by Dr. T. Carbery.

9. Industrial Democracy and Social Ownership.

10. Co-operative Democracy in Industry.

11. Socialism and Inflation.

12. Socialism in the Seventies.

Editor's Note

It was felt that the rather unique experiment in co-operative organisation, as described in the above article, was sufficiently interesting to be brought to the attention of our readers.

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ILO-UNIDO

Memorandum of Understanding

Note from the Editor

In his address to the 26th Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance, the Director-General of the ILO, speaking "on behalf of the agencies of the United Nations family", recalled that several among them, and in particular the United Nations itself, FAO, UNIDO and UNESCO, "carry on important activities in the field of co-operatives" ... and "would like to strengthen their ties with the Alliance".

With this in mind, we have thought that our readers would be particularly interested by the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Director-General of the ILO and the Executive Director of UNIDO. The principal object of this document is to stress the need for close co-operation and effective co-ordination between the two organisations and to define clearly the sectors which are best-suited for this co-operation and which are of primary interest to large sectors of co-operative movements.

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Memorandum of Understanding concerning Co-operation between the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

The Director-General of the International Labour Office and the Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation have agreed upon the following guidelines to govern co-operation between and co-ordination of the activities of the ILO and UNIDO regarding the promotion of the industrial development of developing countries in the spirit of the Lima Declaration on Industrial Development and Co-operation, and having regard to the central role of UNIDO in reviewing and promoting the co-ordination of all activities of the United Nations system in the field of industrial development.

I. Vocational Training

1. The ILO will continue to develop policies and guidelines and carry out operational programmes in the field of vocational training, vocational guidance and rehabilitation for all types of industrial undertakings, irrespective of economic sector or type of ownership for workers of all levels up to and including personnel at the technician and instructor level. This also includes special training programmes for women and young workers. The ILO's activities aim not only at building up or upgrading professional skills but at meeting the requirements of undertakings and the aspirations of workers to vocational career building.

2. Complementary activities of UNIDO will be designed to provide post-employment specialised training in the use of specific equipment and process directly related to the operation of the undertakings, such as specialised quality control, and specific aspects of maintenance and repair. UNIDO will continue to be responsible for the training of graduate engineers.

3. Wherever possible, ILO vocational training activities will be geared to the industrial development plans and targets established by UNIDO at the country level. Where the industrial development activities of UNIDO will require the training of workers or specific skills development programmes, the ILO will endeavour to provide such training to UNIDO specifications. The ILO will also provide whenever required and possible vocational training advisers to participate in UNIDO's industrial development surveys or in programmes aiming at developing groups of industries.

4. Both organisations will co-operate in research and development of training systems and methods and in publishing the results of such research. UNIDO will provide the ILO with information and advice on new technologies as they affect training requirements and methodologies. To the same end, UNIDO will, whenever possible, participate in ILO meetings and workshops on industrial vocational training.

II. Management Development

5. ILO will be responsible for broad intersectoral programmes for the enhancement of managerial awareness, competence and social responsibility of management personnel at all levels of supervision and skills in all branches of economic activity irrespective of type of ownership, including:

(a) identification of needs and programming of action to meet such needs;

(b) dissemination of principles and techniques of effective management;

(c) development of institutions;

(d) training of trainers;

(e) development of management consultancy; and

(f) provision of management research and information services.

6. UNIDO will be responsible for activities in the field of industrial management, including:

(a) Enterprises and factory level industrial management, including the design of management systems, training and consultancy;

(b) Management of industrial research institutes;

(c) Management of industrial estates and services provided at the estates;

(d) Management of industrial fairs;

(e) Management of industrial information centres;

(f) Management of plan and project implementation in the industrial sector, including training of personnel of ministries of planning and industry in the field of industrial development;

(g) Industrial banks, including schemes for exchange of information and co-operation between banks;

(h) Industrial project implementation at the micro level; and

(i) Institutional aspects of industrial management, in particular trouble shooting and consultancy services at the factory and/or industrial branch levels.

UNIDO will therefore provide training for the management of specific industries, enterprises, plants and processes.

7. Both organisations will co-operate closely and promote joint action in the following fields which are of common concern:

(a) Behavioural sciences and motivating people for development;

(b) Methods and techniques for rational decision-making;

(c) Research in, and publication of information on, key issues of management.

III. Maintenance and Repair

8. Within its vocational training activities, the ILO will provide training to workers and supervisors in the normal and routine maintenance operations of industrial equipment. Similarly, the

ILO will continue to include the organisational and cost aspects of maintenance in its management development programmes as a means of enhancing general managerial competence.

9. UNIDO will be responsible for the organisational, economic, technological and engineering aspects of maintenance and repair, including planning of maintenance and repair schemes, establishment of maintenance and repair centres, provision and manufacturing of spare parts, overhaul and repair of industrial equipment and training of personnel specifically engaged in maintenance operations.

IV. Small-scale Industries

10. Both organisations recognise the needs for a comprehensive, coherent approach to the development of small-scale industries in developing countries, and in particular in the least developed of developing countries. To this end, they will exchange full information on their ongoing and projected projects in the least developed countries, especially in connection with country programming exercises, and will devise joint or co-ordinated programmes of action.

11. Within the framework of the foregoing approach, the ILO will be primarily responsible for the development of manpower skills for small-scale industries through formal and non-formal learning systems, including vocational training and management development to the extent defined in preceding paragraphs.

12. Within the framework of the same approach, the UNIDO will be primarily responsible for promoting the development of small-scale industries through the identification and development of domestic markets for the manufactured goods produced by small-scale industries, feasibility studies, financial and fiscal policies designed to promote the development of small-scale industries, including the provision of incentives to entrepreneurs and assistance in drawing up requests for financing, provision of factory accommodation or workshop facilities, including in particular industrial estates and the provision of industrial and technological extension services.

13. Both organisations will closely co-operate in activities related to the identification, motivation and development of potential entrepreneurs and the promotion of entrepreneurship.

V. Industrial Health and Safety, Working Conditions and Environment

14. The ILO will consult UNIDO on the development of its programme for the improvement of working conditions and the environment, in so far as it relates to the industrial sector. Where UNIDO

activities offer opportunities for the improvement of working conditions and the environment, UNIDO will seek the assistance of the ILO.

15. UNIDO will pay due regard to the health, safety and working conditions aspects of its planned industrial activities and consult the ILO thereon. The ILO will make available to UNIDO, on a regular basis, all its standards, manuals and guides, and other publications relating to industrial health and safety, as well as to working conditions in industry. The ILO will also provide UNIDO, upon request, with information and advice on specific industrial health, safety and working conditions problems. Particular care will be taken to avoid conflicts in or erosion of standards.

16. The ILO and UNIDO will consult each other in regard to the planning of meetings dealing with industrial health and safety and working conditions in the industrial sector.

17. Where UNIDO is organising courses which include an industrial health and safety or working conditions component, the ILO will provide the necessary information and assistance for the handling of that component.

18. The advice of industrial health and safety centres established with the assistance of the ILO concerning industrial health and safety problems at country level will be made available to UNIDO.

VI. Employment, Income Distribution and Appropriate Technologies

19. In regard to the relationship between employment promotion policies and industrial development policies, both organisations will be guided by the joint policy paper entitled "Industrialisation, Employment and Social Objectives" which they jointly presented to the Second General Conference of UNIDO (1975, Document ID/CONF.3/9).

20. The ILO will provide UNIDO with information and advice on the employment and income distribution aspects of the long-term industrial development strategies on which UNIDO will undertake studies and research activities.

21. When UNIDO and the ILO undertake survey missions on industrial development strategies or employment promotion strategies, each organisation will provide the other, as appropriate, with the required technical expertise.

22. In the field of research work on appropriate technologies the ILO will deal with the socio-economic aspects of the question while UNIDO will deal with the technological, techno-economic and engineering aspects of the question, where possible research work will be jointly undertaken.

23. In joint technical co-operation projects concerning appropriate technologies UNIDO will provide the technological, techno-economic and engineering expertise and ILO the socio-economic expertise.

24. The results of joint research and technical co-operation projects will be jointly published by the ILO and UNIDO.

25. The ILO and UNIDO will provide each other with the fullest information on current and proposed technical co-operation and research projects related to appropriate technologies.

VII. Industrial Activities

26. The ILO will regularly furnish UNIDO with advance information on meetings held within the framework of its Programme of Industrial Activities and on the agenda of such meetings.

27. At the request of the ILO, UNIDO will supply contributions to the general reports for such meetings, dealing with technological, economic and allied developments in the industry concerned and, as appropriate, with industrial development policies in the industry concerned, so as to test the views of employers and workers as well as of governments.

28. The ILO will also invite UNIDO contributions to the reports on the technical items on the agenda of such meetings where the subject-matter is of concern to UNIDO.

29. Upon invitation of the ILO, UNIDO will attend and participate in major industrial meetings and shall receive all notes on proceedings.

30. The ILO will keep UNIDO informed of the action taken by governments and national organisations of employers and workers in the sector concerned to implement the recommendations of such meetings. The ILO will seek UNIDO's co-operation whenever required for the implementation of the recommendations addressed to it.

31. To the extent that resources permit, contacts at working level will be strengthened in regard to preparation and follow up of such meetings as well as to research and publications activities.

VIII. Special Measures

32. The present memorandum has been drawn up taking into account the spirit of the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action as embodied in its major provisions. It is, however, recognised that in the light of General Assembly Resolution 3362(S-VII) on development and

international economic co-operation and the Declaration and Programme of Action recently adopted by the World Employment Conference, new areas of long-range co-operation and co-ordination will have emerged. Accordingly, it is hereby agreed that a joint task force be promptly established to review the correlation of these decisions and to define programmes of broad-based co-operative action in such areas as employment and the distribution of industries, industrial consultations and negotiations, industrial development and the satisfaction of basic needs, rural industrialisation, transfer of technologies, selection and application of appropriate technologies and any other areas of common interest which the task force may identify.

IX. Measures of Implementation

33. The ILO and UNIDO will keep each other informed of the development of their respective activities related to industrialisation, including but not limited to the specific arrangements otherwise provided herein, and will ensure that they are co-ordinated, complementary and mutually supporting. To this end, consultation and co-operation will be initiated at the earliest possible time, preferably at the pre-planning stage.

34. The ILO and UNIDO will maintain the present joint Working Party composed of one senior permanent member from each organisation and such other officials as may be required for the consideration of any particular question. The joint Working Party will meet from time to time and at least once a year, alternately in Geneva and Vienna, under the chairmanship of the permanent member of the host organisation. At its regular meetings, the Working Party will review all current and proposed technical co-operation projects of mutual interest. Whenever necessary, the Working Party, suitably composed for the purpose, will consider issues of policy and make recommendations thereon to the Executive Heads of the two organisations.

35. The present memorandum will be jointly communicated to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, and brought to the attention of the Governing Body of the ILO and of the Industrial Development Board of UNIDO.

36. The Executive Head of each organisation will bring this memorandum to the notice of its headquarters and field staff concerned with instructions to apply faithfully each and every one of its provisions.

X. Final Clauses

37. The present memorandum of understanding will supersede the "Memorandum of Guidelines for Co-operation between ILO and UNIDO"

signed at Geneva on 3 April 1968, and all subsequent understandings and agreements on co-operation between the parties.

38. The present memorandum will come into effect upon signature and constitutes the basic guidelines governing co-operation between the ILO and UNIDO until otherwise modified by mutual agreement. This memorandum may be terminated by either party upon six months' notice in writing.

Done at Geneva on 31 August 1976.

Francis Blanchard
Director-General of the
International Labour Office

Abd-El Rahman Khane
Executive Director of
the United Nations Industrial
Development Organisation

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International

IFAP

Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)

The International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) held a session of its Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation in Paris on 20 and 21 September 1976. The agenda placed before it included, inter alia, a statement on suggested joint activities to be carried out by co-operatives in the sector of fertilizers, and more particularly, a document concerning co-operative strategies vis-à-vis multi-national agri-food companies. As in the case of other agricultural organisations and of the International Co-operative Alliance, IFAP is seriously preoccupied by the growth of multi-national companies in the Agri-Food Industry.

There was a wide exchange of views on this subject among members of the Standing Committee who noted, in the first instance that the actual impact of multi-national companies had remained of minor importance for a long time; this could be explained by the fact that capital invested in agriculture has a very limited profitability. However, in recent years, in countries, including developing countries, where the process of industrialisation has started, new substantial investments have been made by multi-national companies. The part played by such companies in developing countries is becoming increasingly important, whether it be in industrial plantations or in large-scale livestock ranches tied to a processing plant.

Quite evidently, such developments have a direct influence on the position of traditional farmers, if only in the fields of credit, price policy, etc. The Standing Committee noted that upstream concentration is particularly strong whereas co-operatives remain very weak in the fertilizer industry, in the production of farm machinery and of feeds. Downstream, multi-national companies currently supply not far from 40 per cent of processed food products at world level. Furthermore, as opposed to co-operatives which are restricted to their geographical location, multi-national companies are able to

draw maximum benefit from international differences in supply costs, wages, fiscal regimes, outlets, etc. and they are also able to diversify their activities at will using profitability as their sole criterion. The Committee further noted that, particularly in agri-food industry, these companies concentrate within themselves considerable financial, technological and human resources which are still out of reach of co-operative organisations and of agricultural trade unions.

It nevertheless remains that co-operatives have also demonstrated their ability to manage markets in the mutual interest of consumers and producers. Thus, certain local, regional or national markets have been supplied by regional co-operatives able to provide fresh products of regular quality. On the other hand, however, in the case of markets with a very strong international character (for instance, grains) co-operatives will have to regroup if they do not want to be left with the role of mere collectors for the multi-national companies which dominate the world market.

The members of the Standing Committee stressed the fact that, on the food markets, it is the highly processed products (prepared foods, baby foods, soft drinks, etc.) for which consumption is increasing the fastest and which provide the largest margins of profit. For co-operatives to make a place for themselves on such markets, they will have to have considerable means at their disposal in order to be able to prepare market studies, set up multi-purpose integrated competitive processing facilities, and create efficient distribution networks. It is therefore important that certain forms of anti-economic competition between co-operatives be eliminated. This would represent a first step towards co-operation between co-operatives.

But, in the face of this "gigantism" which may become common rule if co-operatives are to become really competitive, co-operative leaders have a fundamental problem to solve: that of strengthening member participation in the management of their enterprise and, above all, that of formulating the policy of their co-operative and of organisations at the secondary - or even higher - level of which primary organisations are members.

In certain cases, if an autonomous co-operative development strategy seems indispensable in sectors where corporate business holds a dominant position, the possibility is not excluded of contractual agreements being passed, as has already been the case, between co-operatives and corporate business. But these agreements will only be equitable if co-operatives have sufficient means to share fully in the benefits.

To enable co-operatives to play an effective role vis-à-vis the development of multi-nationals, the Standing Committee stressed that experiments in collaboration between co-operatives will have to expand further in the years to come and that the development of international collaboration between co-operatives should be implemented in a practical manner starting from the actual position prevailing in different sectors. The Standing Committee further stressed that

such a collaboration necessitated a permanent updating of the way in which each co-operative envisaged its function.

At the end of its session, addressing itself to the world agricultural co-operative movement as a whole, the Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation made the following proposals:

" (i) Urgent attention should be given to developing and promoting activities directly related to the foregoing, as follows:

(a) management training, especially within the co-operative movement;

(b) research in the area of market development conducted jointly by interested co-operatives;

(c) establishment of an information bank outlining current developments in the agri-food sector;

(d) promotion of inter-cooperative trade along the lines developed by, inter alia, the International Co-operative Alliance.

(ii) With a view to facilitating inter-cooperative collaboration at the international level, the Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation will promote exchanges between co-operative groups both in the field of training and in the developments of joint undertakings in marketing or production".

As a first step, in preparing for the next General Conference of IFAP, which will be held in Helsinki in June 1977, the Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation will expand its study on the means at the disposal of the co-operative movement and on current developments in the agri-food sector.

It will be noted that, as a first example of collaboration with other international, governmental or non-governmental organisations, a joint conference was organised by the Agricultural Committee of the ICA and the Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operation of IFAP which was held in Paris on 23 September 1976. A joint statement was issued at the close of the meeting.

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Togo

Collaboration between Co-operatives: An Example.

Throughout the world, and especially in the developing countries, the co-operative movement is still looked upon as a powerful instrument for national development, one reason being that it offers a means whereby an influence can be exerted on the rural masses.

Thus for the last ten years or so, many African countries have been concentrating their efforts on giving a fresh boost to their national co-operative movements, which have fragile sometimes experienced setbacks and have remained. To this end, they frequently appeal for help from abroad. Numerous have been the technical assistance projects devised with the help of United Nations agencies and bilateral assistance agencies.

Nevertheless, although this has been less frequent, there have been assistance schemes run by private organisations. One of them could serve as an example. This is a campaign undertaken, in close collaboration with the Togolese Government, by the Association of Regional Agricultural Funds for Brittany and the Loire Valley (France) to assist in the development of rural credit and the co-operative movement in Togo.

This example of collaboration between French co-operators and the peasants of a country more than, 3,000 miles away from France deserves a mention, for it represents the successful outcome of continuous contacts between Togolese officials and peasants and the French director of a regional agricultural credit fund.

In 1966, the Togolese Government had asked the ILO to undertake a UNDP-funded mission designed to ascertain rural credit requirements and to suggest possible action. Mr. B. Moreau, Director of the Sarthe Agricultural Credit Fund in France (CRCAM), was appointed to undertake the mission. At the end of his assignment, B. Moreau recommended the setting-up of a National Agricultural Credit Fund (CNCA); this was achieved in June 1967.

The close contacts established by B. Moreau with men determined to concentrate their efforts on the development of their country, were further strengthened during a second ILO mission to Lomé which he carried out in 1969. The purpose of this mission was to evaluate the situation after the Togolese National Agricultural Credit Fund (CNCAT) had been functioning for 2 years.

B. Moreau observed that the CNCAT had managed to balance its accounts without calling on foreign organisations for help, but that its further development was seriously hampered by the very poor functioning of a great number of agricultural marketing co-operatives which encountered great difficulties in repaying CNCAT loans.

In order to help the CNCAT to further consolidate its organisation and functioning, B. Moreau returned to Togo on several occasions. At the same time, the Sarthe Agricultural Credit Fund in France (CRCAM) granted fellowships to several Togolese officials from CNCAT, who received training at CRCAM headquarters and were able to improve their knowledge.

Close fraternal links were therefore gradually forged between the Sarthe Agricultural Credit Fund and the Togolese National Credit Fund. This relationship resulted in the pairing of the two organisations in March 1970 and, in November of the same year, several members of the Committee of Management of the CRCAM flew out to Togo to meet their Togolese friends; this was followed by the inauguration of the new CRCAM headquarters at Le Mans, on 18 October 1973, in the presence of the President of the Togolese National Agricultural Credit Fund. In 1974, CNCAT offices were opened at Sokodé and Lama-Kara, with responsible officers of the Sarthe Agricultural Credit Fund (CRCAM) attending the ceremonies. Finally, in 1976, an office was opened at Dapaon, with the result that CNCAT covers the whole of the country.

A further step was made in this inter-cooperative relationship when the attention of the Association of the nine regional agricultural credit funds of Brittany and the Loire Valley, was drawn by the Sarthe Regional Fund, one of its members, on the activities it had undertaken in Togo. As a result, the Association decided to assist in expanding these activities. There was an urgent need to strengthen activities in the field of staff training, and, above all, to assist the Togolese co-operative movement in improving the organisation, management and operation of agricultural co-operatives by providing the expertise and some of the equipment.

An agreement, defining the relations between the Togolese Government and the Association of Regional Funds was drawn up and signed in July 1975 at Le Mans, and two months later, a senior officer from the Sarthe Regional Fund (who had already carried out a mission in Togo for the FAO) arrived in Lomé on a three-year assignment (renewable), armed with the requisite equipment and means. This expert has now been working for a year within the newly created Department of Co-operation, Friendly Societies and Credit in close

collaboration with Togolese officials and an ILO expert on the co-operative movement who arrived in Togo in 1976. These concerted activities are now starting to bear concrete results, particularly as concerns the cocoa and coffee marketing unions and co-operatives.

It is worthwhile noting here the speed with which these decisions were taken and given specific effect, as well as the co-operative solidarity which the action reflects: indeed the employees of the Sarthe Regional Fund and their Staff Committee were responsible for the financing of the project, along with the co-operative members of the regional funds.

Arising from truly fraternal contacts, this "experiment" carried out by the members of the Regional Agricultural Credit Funds of Brittany and the Loire Valley can be considered as a completely unselfish application of the principle of inter-cooperation which was restored at the Vienna Congress (1966) of the International Co-operative Alliance, and was one of the two main topics of the 26th Congress of the Alliance (November 1976). To illustrate this principle, let it be recalled that the text of the Agreement between the Government of Togo and the Association of Regional Funds does not mention any counterpart contribution from the Togolese Government, but states the assurance on the part of the Togolese Government to pursue the action after the date of expiration of the Agreement.

Perhaps similar schemes could be attempted elsewhere. For instance, the French National Confederation of Friendly Societies, Co-operation and Agricultural Credit (CNMCCA) has appraised the positive and concrete achievements in Togo and is ready to foster contacts with farmers and agricultural organisations in other developing countries so that the French friendly society and co-operative movement can assist in the overall development of these countries. (Taken from a letter of the President of the Confederation to its members).

(Original in French)

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